VOL. X. (No. 2) OCTOBER, 1912 No. 38

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

The Theosophical Quarterly.

Published by The Theosophical Society at
159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

In Europe single numbers may be obtained from and subscriptions sent to
Dr. Archibald Keightley, 46 Brook Street, London, W., England.

Price for non-members, $1.00 per annum; single copies, 25 cents.

CONTENTS OF VOL. X., No. 2.

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	97
FRAGMENTS	104
LETTERS TO FRIENDS	106
SAINTLINESS AND BUSINESS	112
THREE BOOKS ON THE VEDANTA	120
THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE	129
SOME ASPECTS OF THEOSOPHY	136
WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY	144
THE SPIRITUAL ORIGIN OF LIFE	160
ON THE SCREEN OF TIME	164
WHY ARE WE HERE	181
REVIEWS	185
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	187
T. S. ACTIVITIES	189

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered July 17, 1903, at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter, under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894.

Copyright, 1912, by The Theosophical Society.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

OCTOBER, 1912

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

The Art of Joy

WE live, they say, in great days; days of rare discoveries and wonderful doings. We have reached the North Pole and the South, and every one who has read of these fine and hazardous adventures,—and who, in the wide, wide world, has not heard of them, in these days when telegrams penetrate to inland China, through darkest Africa, and among the islands of the sea?—everyone, then, who has read of these world-searching conquests has felt his heart glow with satisfaction, as though he himself had won a goal, even paid a long outstanding, imperative debt. Perhaps we should say "her heart" also, for are not these great days also for feminine, or rather feminist, adventure?

So the Poles are found, and our spirits are, to that extent, assuaged. And future philosophers will note that, in the same year that the North Pole was discovered, lame Blériot, hindered by his infirmity from daring deeds on ice and snow, threw aside his crutches, climbed on his aeroplane, and flew, bird-like, or, even more, dragonfly-like, across the English Channel: the first great spectacular air-victory, grown from the solider, more prosaic flights of the Dayton heroes. We all soared in thought with Blériot, as we strained and shivered to the Poles, with Peary and Amundsen.

We have talked, too, across oceans and mountain-ranges with Marconi: not, perhaps, in our proper persons, but that is not necessary, thanks to the solidarity of mankind, and our imaginative power. We have lived, too, to see music put up in little boxes and sent about by post; pictures that move, and, in actual colors of life, like those wonderful ones of the Durbar scenes in India, make the very souls of things march

and countermarch for us on the screen. The depths of the sea, too, are visited. We can shoot torpedoes from beneath at mighty, but all too vulnerable battle-ships; we can rain projectiles on them from the sky. Truly, wonderful days.

Who shall fitly write of that great wonder of our age, the revolt of woman? Whose heart has not been stirred at the parades of many colors, but all with like heroic hearts? Who has not felt a pang of wonder, a glow of abashed surprise, when hatchets have been flung by silk-gloved, gentle hands at English prime-ministers, when Secretaries of State have been cuffed by irate martyrs at festal functions, when theaters have been inflamed, to be a torch to light mankind, or as a beacon-warning, at least, to that half of mankind which, hitherto, has held a precarious, flimsy superiority? Is it not, indeed, a wonderful age?

We see, too, with like feelings of wonderment and amaze, the coming revolt of the children. If woman be liberated, shall not the child, too, go free? Away with leading strings, with spankings and oppression. The cradle is the true home of political and social wisdom. Let the bonds be broken; let the children vote! They should, too, be amply supplied with money and other luxuries; are we not all citizens together? Why these injurious discriminations and distinctions, merely on account of age? It would be well, also, if, to carry throughout the spirit of our age, masters should more conscientiously and continuously obey their servants; the foolish should command and guide the wise; the vicious should instruct the righteous in virtue.

Perhaps you are reproaching me for writing in a spirit of levity, a whimsical humor, of things very grave and of deep import? But did not Rosalind say that it is better than swearing? One must speak humorously of these things, lest one grow wrathful and indignant. That there is cause for real and deep indignation, let the following extract show, taken from a newspaper of the day.

The Kings County Grand Jurors, says the recorder, who have just finished a session lasting through July and August, suggested in a presentment handed to Judge Dike in the County Court yesterday that the heads of the various religious organizations give more time to missionary work right at home. The jury declared in its presentment: "We have noted with deep regret the number of young men and boys who have just commenced a life of crime brought about by idleness and improper associates. Especially brought to our attention has been the number of minor girls who have gone astray from a virtuous life by apparent laxity or inability of parents or guardians to give their coming and going from their homes proper watchfulness.

"The remedy for these conditions is a subject that should receive the attention of the authorities and the various religious denominations of this borough. This Grand Jury would suggest that if the head representatives of the various denominations were invited to attend a session of the County Court on arraignment days they would see for themselves what is actually going on, and then instead of paying so much attention to foreign missions they would better understand the maxim that 'charity begins at home.'"

The writer of sensational headings in the true spirit of the day labels this: "Jury objects to Missions," which is a gross distortion of its real purpose, but more likely to tickle the reader's palate, and therefore not only pardonable but praiseworthy. A gross distortion, we say. For the point is, not that there are too many missions, but that there is too little discipline, too little obedience. Who, after all, is directly and immediately responsible for these unhappy boys who, through evil companionship, fall into dishonesty, these far more unhappy girls who fall into impurity and shame?

First of all, their mothers. Would these not be better employed in attending to this, their primal and holy duty, than in crying out for votes and political activities? They have not taught their children to obey; have not compelled obedience, as they should have done, from earliest childhood. Having sowed the wind of anarchy,—for to permit disobedience where obedience is due, is anarchical,—they now reap the whirlwind of sorrow and desolation and shame for their children, the boys branded as thieves, the girls stained and disgraced.

This toleration of disobedience where obedience is due, is their foolish, often well-meaning tribute to the spirit of the age, to the idols of liberty and democracy. They are afraid to compel obedience, lest their own children, in the name of liberty, reproach them and call them tyrannous. So the children get their way, and it takes them swiftly to the devil. Missions, in the sense suggested by the Kings Grand Jury would not avail. A change of ideal is needed, a new world-view, based, not on self-indulgence and self-assertion, but on obedience and humility.

We spoke, a little while ago, of the feminist parade, the cry of "Votes for Women." Women should consider well how much of mere self-indulgence and self-assertion expresses itself in that cry, how little it springs from the pure desire of service. They should consider, too, how servile, parrot-like, monkey-like is this longing to imitate the mere symbols and symptoms of the political activities of men. For a vote is but a symbol, the label of a hard-earned reality, the indication that there is a power there, a real political force, an ability to build, to serve. Through long, toiling, warring, suffering centuries, men have gained a

certain power to build and keep together large communities. The power is everything. The label, the vote, is nothing. It is distinctly a masculine power; a power wholly developed by the toil and conflict of men. The vote cannot confer it, nor could the withdrawal of the vote take it away.

It was with a genuine sense of amusement that we read the following passage in *The Nineteenth Century and After,* a day or two after writing the above paragraph. It is taken from an article on the Failure of Feminism in Finland. The writer, Edith Sellers, says: "Since female suffrage came into force, a fairly large section of town-dwelling Finnish women have lost considerably in what one might call 'sweet reasonableness.' They are now so keenly alive to their own rights that they are apt to forget that other folks have rights, and that they themselves have duties. They have lost in balance, too; politics are for them now the be-all and end-all of life; they have not a thought in their heads for any other subject, excepting perhaps feminism. They seem never quite happy unless at a public meeting, listening to political discourses, or, better still, delivering them. No political question is too complex for them to deal with in their present frame of mind; they will produce at a moment's notice solutions for problems that have baffled statesmen for years; and will start off on lecturing tours on the slightest provocation. They are much more eager to be out in the world than in their own houses; home-life, indeed, has lost all attraction for them. . . . They are practically never at rest; early and late they are on the go, to the detriment, of course, of their nerves, and through them of their health, and much besides."

It is the passion for self-assertion, for self-indulgence, that inspires the shrill cries of the feminist paraders. Their victory, should they gain one, will be the gravest defeat womankind could possibly suffer. One is tempted to say: Let me, as an archæological study, write a treatise on the Influence of Woman; let me glean the facts before they vanish altogether, as our bureau of ethnology collects the customs, the languages, the arts, of dying aboriginal races. The triumph of the feminist movement will mean the death of the influence of woman.

Why? Because it will be a triumph of self-assertion and self-indulgence; and these are fatal to all alike; fatal to men, more fatal to women, most fatal, as the Kings Grand Jury showed, to children, to the boys who become thieves, the girls who fall into impurity and shame. As a last word on the feminist question; if I am wronging the seekers of votes for women, if their real desire is not self-assertion but service, I shall be delighted to have it so proven, but if their desire is to serve,

why not serve? Why wait for a vote? Why not begin by inquiring what it is that really needs to be done?

But, the women reply, with that age-old love of answering back, that the men are as bad and worse; that they are corrupt, dishonest in political action, venal through and through, always ready to sell themselves for a dollar or a drink. Look, for example, at the condition of things revealed during the summer months in New York; the almost unthinkable corruption and dishonesty, penetrating in every direction, with ramifications innumerable.

Yes, let us look and consider. What of these revelations? A gambler is waylaid and shot in the street. His murderers escape, but the car in which they flee is recognized, not by the police, but by a citizen who is bullied and locked up for giving the information. Then come arrests, confessions, accusations. The chief penitent declares that a high police officer ordered the murder, threatening to bring false charges against his tools, and to send them to penal servitude on trumped-up charges and manufactured evidence, if they refused to kill his victim, who, once his partner, had become his enemy. Then revelations came thick and fast. It was alleged that this murder was no casual, detached happening, but the almost inevitable outcrop of great layers of dishonesty and blackmail. The confessing accuser, declaring that he himself had for years assisted to collect it, estimated this blackmail at two and a half million dollars each year, for the protection of gambling alone.

Immediately on the heels of this came the report of a committee for the suppression of vice; by vice, meaning impure sexual self-indulgence. This committee disclosed many horrible details of a horrible traffic; but, to confine ourselves to one only, they estimated the blackmail paid for the toleration of this evil at some three million dollars yearly, for the one city, New York.

The present writer has been told, on excellent authority, that, in the same city, liberty to break the law against the sale of intoxicants on Sunday, paid, until quite recently, a tax of like amount, three million dollars every year. Let us say, then, ten million dollars yearly for the protection, by the police, of unlawful pandering to the evil passions of men; and this in a single city.

A frightful arraignment, without doubt. Who is to bear the blame? It is, of course, quite easy, and also quite just, to reprobate officers and men of the police force who grow rich on blackmail, and who will not stick at murder, to protect their evil lives and evil gains. It is easy, too, to reprobate the vile race of professional gamblers and panderers, guilty of all imaginable meanness, treachery and dishonesty, who pay blackmail to secure immunity in evil doing. It is likewise easy to condemn the

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

political organizations, which, claiming to make themselves responsible for government, not only permit, but in all likelihood fatten upon, evil and abominable conditions such as these.

But, when we have thus condemned, have we done complete justice? Hardly. For consider the matter thus: Ten millions of tribute for blackmail is but a part, whether it be a tenth, or a fourth or a half, matters not, of the taking of the gamblers and panders and sellers of liquor under illegal conditions. It stands to reason that they do not give up all their takings for protection in evil. If they did, they would starve. Much sticks to their fingers; at least, much passes through their hands. Let us say that their tyrants compel them to disgorge one-half of their plunder. That would mean that twenty million dollars a year are paid by men, in one city alone, for the gratification of evil passions and appetites under conditions forbidden by the law, and leaving wholly out of account the evil gratification which the law tolerates. Incidentally, one may suggest, this sheds a somewhat lurid light on the wisdom and virtue of "the people," whose inherent rectitude, we are told, when freely applied to government, is to lead in a new golden age.

But let us go back to our point. Twenty millions, on the lowest estimate, paid each year by the men of a single city for the gratification of evil passions under conditions forbidden by the law; passions, too, which are wholly morbid, which are as damaging to physical and mental well-being as they are contrary to wholesome natural life. Here is material from which the upholders of the feminist movement may draw very damaging morals, concerning man's political competence and claimed superiority.

Let them draw the true moral, however. That moral, we take it, is this. These evil and abominable conditions arise, not from government by men, but from the logical and inevitable working of a false ideal which at present vitiates that government: the ideal of self-assertion and self-indulgence, which is none the less destructive, because it wears the fair name of "liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

We are coming now to the theme which gives the title to these NOTES AND COMMENTS: the Art of Joy. The whole evil lies, if we be right, in that very ideal, the *pursuit* of happiness. Happiness should never be pursued; if pursued, happiness is never captured. Ask the gamblers, ask the panders, ask the fools upon whom these fatten, ask the wretched women who are sacrificed to them, whether they are happy. They will cry out and wish to tear you to pieces, for the bitter, merciless irony of your question. Why is it so many of them, as has been shown, use opium and alcohol? Because their misery is intolerable, and they seek at any price to forget it. The passionate thirst for sensation, which the victims of gambler and pander are trying to assuage, is

not happiness, it is misery, a misery almost intolerable. Dishonesty is misery, too, whether it be the stealing of mites or millions, the sneaking pilfering of petty thieves and pickpockets, or the wholesale theft of great corporate bodies, which corrupt the sources of government and law that they may steal unpunished; and no gilding of political or social vanities will make it less miserable.

Here, then, is the true moral, so far as feminism is concerned. If self-assertion and self-indulgence in men have borne such evil fruit, how dangerous these must be, as the motive-forces of the "emancipation" of women, how certain to end in disaster. To end, also, as they begin, in miserable unhappiness. For there is no pain equal to the sting of self-assertion and self-indulgence, and the thirst for sensation which engenders these.

Thus, from considering its opposite, we come to the art of joy. Let the direct truth be told. It is false to say that we are born free and equal, with a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We are really born bound hand and foot by past Karma, by old, unatoned sins. We are born unequal in all things, except the need of mercy and redemption. We had rights once, as an eloquent preacher said, but we sinned them all away. We have now neither rights nor privileges, but debts and duties only: the duties of humility and obedience. And so far as the pursuit of happiness is concerned, nothing is more instantly and completely fatal to happiness than that pursuit. We can no more overtake happiness than we can stand on the heads of our own shadows, when the sun is near the horizon. Swiftly as we may run, the shadows escape as swiftly. Happiness likewise eludes us, if we are unwise enough to pursue her. If you still doubt, ask the gamblers and panders, their victims and their tyrants. They are all pursuing happiness. Ask them whether they have overtaken their quarry.

There lies the fundamental folly and mistake. Happiness is not a goal, but a result: the necessary, the inevitable result of obedience to spiritual law, and of complete self-surrender, in order that obedience may begin. There is no misery, no evil, like self-will; and the art of joy consists in surrendering self, that we may obey the wise and just and holy Law. When our foolish, unhappy age has run its course, when the dregs of the "pursuit of happiness" have been tasted, when the false idols of self-assertive "liberty" are broken and deserted, when the search for a material paradise based on the maximum of self-indulgence is abandoned, then may the long lost clue of happiness be found, the mysterious, hidden secret recovered of the forgotten art of joy. That clue will lead to a shrine, over which is written, in golden letters:

> "Joy comes only, and comes inevitably, through self-surrender and obedience."

FRAGMENTS

YOUR situation is fraught with difficulties, but you can see what it is doing for you, and that makes it easier. You have brought all this upon yourself by your own ardour and the working of the inner fire. School yourself as you are doing; preserves your clearness of vision, for mental confusion would be fraught with danger. Keep faith, and, as far as possible, serenity. Here are your present lessons, fitting you for greater work. . . . In the stillness of these days let your heart grow, living with nature which you love. These times of quiet are needed to draw in deep draughts of peace and harmony. This is your trust; and, keeping it faithfully, from your convent stillness will go forth a power to aid the world. You have the wish of your heart,—what I have always read there,—to work behind the scenes, distributing blessings which those who receive know not of. But have patience when the other demands come. There are reasons for it all, and you will trust me. . . .

Dear Child, I pity you, and yet the way is clear enough. Again the darkness gathers and the struggle comes: but what of that? Another turning point in the journey; another lesson learned. Take heart and battle on. Much, much is there to try you; but much, much have you to learn. Do not fear and fight yourself so. Too much struggle; too little faith and calm. Can you not rest on the eternal verities? Knowing the great depths below, consider not the ripples on the surface of the water? Great pain! I know your pain, but also your great privileges. I know you mean to be true and do rightly, whatever the cost. Do it then; and remember,—*it will cost something;* that is inevitable. Also you do not need more instruction, but to live by what you know. You have that within which brings you in close contact with truth and knowledge, from which you can learn all: only the brain stands between, and that you can conquer by purification. These matters—all—of personality especially, you will understand bit by bit. Meditation will do it. Do not strive so after it: let it *come*. . . .

You see how help given another, returns to you. Loving, unselfish thought expended returns as inspiration. I know you had no thought

of reward,—that is just the point: merely an intense desire that the good should be accomplished. Follow these impulses always. The angels garner them like lilies, transplanting them to heaven where they bloom in immortal beauty for the joy and healing of the nations. Kind deeds are helpful. So are kindly words,—as all men know. But kindly thoughts and wishes are more helpful still: most helpful are our prayers. . . .

A holy light and a blessing surround you to-night from which you may gather strength and comfort in the darkness through which you are struggling. Open your heart to these influences and drink them in as a flower the dew in the quiet hush of the night. Fear not, oh! suffering heart, oh! wilful, struggling nature. I know your pain and burden, and the heavy pressure of life upon you. But in time you shall understand better, and meanwhile, courage and patience. . . .

We do not need to see our way ahead; we only need to see our next step. If you could see your way ahead to-day, you would be far more bewildered than you are. What use is information to a man who cannot transform it into knowledge, and that knowledge into wisdom? More often he is blinder than before; sometimes it destroys him. Look at your modern education (forbid the word in such connection!): how many souls has it drawn forth from personal and material life to flourish in the world of light and reality? And by such harvests shall you judge of things, as must all who believe in Immortality. Efficiency? yes, that is a test. But efficiency in what? In muscle? in brain? or in spirit? Which of these three witness more than one short earthly span? We who are builders, not of time but of Eternity, and who therefore keep mastery of time, can have but one reply. Are not these eternal verities? Rest in them.

And for the knowledge which leads to wisdom—meditate, meditate, meditate: all lies in that. Melt all experience in the crucible of the heart; brood over it there in peace, and bring it forth again pure gold of vision and inspiration. The whole Universe is waiting to reveal itself to you; the mysteries of nature need only your open Sesame, for you to become partaker of their deepest secrets. Therefore seek purity, without which there is no vision; obedience, without which there is no power; courage, without which there is no advance. And so good night, and my blessing. CAVÉ.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

V

DEAR FRIEND:

WHY are you so troubled and depressed? Simply because you cannot write as you would wish? What would your answer be if I were to tell you that that is vanity? That the greater part of these fine tragic self-reproaches of yours are nothing but the hysterics of your spinster emotions, indulged, forsooth, because their precious vanity has cut its finger? I wish I were there to shake you—and after the shaking really to hurt your vanity by showing it to you. Let us imagine the conversation:

I (after administering the shaking): Well?

YOU: I cannot write.

I: Well?

YOU: I have to write.

I: Then write.

YOU: I cannot.

I: If you must you can—you know that as well as I.

YOU: I cannot. I sit for hours before blank paper. I write endless beginnings. My floor is littered, carpeted, with first sheets to which there are no seconds. They——

I: Why are there no second sheets?

YOU: Because the first are sheerest drivel. Chose any two at random and I wager you will vow each is worse than the other. When I try to sleep they rise from the floor—the torn and scattered fragments reassemble from under the table, from the scrap-basket, the ash-cart and the four winds of heaven—and the sentences dance before my eyes a dance of delirium, a St. Vitus's dance of meaningless mental twitchings. Starting in one direction they sheer violently into another, or pause and waver in mid-career in obvious forgetfulness of their initial purpose and in patent pained surprise at the discovery of their own position. I have no ideas, no will, nothing but—

I: Nothing but an imagination. Why were there no second sheets?

YOU: No human being could write a second sheet to one of those beginnings.

I: That is not true.

YOU: Not and keep his self-respect.

I: At last the truth appears. You mean that the thought of yourself as writer outweighed the thought of your purposes in writ-

ing. Beginning badly you were unwilling to continue. Your vanity paralyzed your will.

What would you say to that?

Dear friend, I know what you would say; and it is true. You would tell me that you had not looked upon this writing as for yourself but for one to whom you owed the best that was in you—that you felt nothing but your best was worthy to enter into your service of the Master—and that you knew this was not your best, so that you began again and again to try to do it better. This is not vanity, but such a feeling as everyone who loves must know. And yet, as it manifested itself in you, it was a barrier, a sin, even when stripped of the vanity which was mingled with it, and the sin was the sin of non-acceptance.

Suppose, instead of tearing up each sheet as it was written—instead of resenting the fatigue of your mind and the dissonance of your mood—you had accepted them quite simply and humbly, and had offered them in your heart to the Master for whose service you sought to write. Could you not have trusted him to make good even your poor workmanship? What would have been the result? You have proved it in your own experience many times. You would have gone on to the second sheet and the third; and many sheets would have been written where now there are none at all. Even if badly done they would have been better than nothing. But they would not have been badly done. You know that with each page you wrote you would have written better—your mood would have changed with the steady pressure of your will—the current of your thought would have gathered strength and volume in the new channel you were cutting for it. And when you had reached the end you would have found there the power to begin. Then you could have gone back and rewritten easily and quickly what had been done amiss.

But, as it was, you permitted yourself to fret and to fume, and lashed your mind till it lost all power to understand what was asked of it. I have seen brutal drivers fall into such a temper with their horses, and whip and jerk them first here and then there till the poor beasts could only pant and snort and plunge aimlessly and ineffectively. You have been told to treat your mind as a child—to lead it gently and firmly where you would have it go. And here you have been abusing it as you would let no animal be treated.

Now if this does not give you something with which really to reproach yourself—if you still persist in the attempt to cover your true fault with self-pity and self-abuse for imaginary evils—I have yet another prescription to offer you. Take down the first volume you published and reread it—aloud—to me, whom you are to imagine

there beside you. And when you come to the passages which you had laboured most upon,—which were finally couched in the fine poetic imagery, and balanced form you sought, and which pleased you mightily at the time,—just imagine my eyes upon you and have the decency to blush for them. You will blush I know, for you have grown since those early days, and can see now in retrospect, what I could never make you see at the time, that what was of value in your work was not its form but its spirit and its substance. Is this less true now than then? Are you still seeking to produce prose masterpieces? Or are you trying to show forth the light that has been put into your heart: to speak the message that it has been given you to speak? Oh, vanity, vanity, how subtlely do you change your countenance and steal upon us in the guise of our best and truest friends. For has the labourer any better friend than the will to do his work as perfectly as in him lies?

But do not think that I am even yet done with your scrupulosity. When the torture of this reading is over I purpose that you should take me for a walk—more, a climb. We are to leave your garden, with its shade trees and flowered walks, and clamber down the hill-side through the vineyards, by the little path behind the house. It is something of a descent to the village in the valley, and as you look back, your hill-top seems to loom mountainous above it. But we are not to stop here; otherwise there would be no use for those clumsy hobnailed boots of yours. They were made for the heights, and to the heights we are bound: to the real mountain that rises sheer from the far side of the village, cutting off the north winds and letting your roses bloom even in March. When we have reached the first and lowest of its great ridges I shall let you stop and look down on what we have left. You know the view well; and I too have been there with you, learning to breathe again the air from the snows and to rest on its wide horizons our tired myopic vision.

Look down now upon your hill top and see it—merged into the plain. The steeply terraced vineyards are flattened out. Your great shade trees are but patches of darker green. But all is beautiful, lying there far beneath us in the sunlight, with the shadows of the clouds sweeping silently, caressingly across it. All is beautiful. And from this height—this lowest of the mountain's peaks—all is holy.

Dear Friend, if you and I can so see the fields in which our lives are lived—our hill-tops and depressions—how do you think they lie beneath the Master's gaze? Do you think the hills are dearer to him than the valleys? The vineyards than the corn lands? For each soil produces its own crop; and this bare face of stone, where not even a rockfern can cling, provides the radiating heat and sheltering wall that let your roses live. Is not the secret of all this hus-

bandry, of all this varied usefulness and varied beauty, *acceptance?* And if we are thus wise in physical things, shall we be less wise in the things of the spirit? Did not our way to this height lead us first into the meadows? And if we are to climb further toward the snows must we not again descend from the ridge where we now stand? Fie upon you, mountaineer and gardener, to have learned so ill the lessons of your crafts.

I wonder when we shall really learn the lesson which all crafts and all nature teach: that humility is a power; that great things are done by little; and that acceptance is the fulcrum which Archimedes sought,—(and sought in vain because he looked outside himself) by which to move the world,—by which Faith and Love do move the world. Look down again upon this scene, and see it, not as now from this great height, but as you remember it close at hand. Nowhere is there waste. There is in all its wide extent no barren neglected ugliness. And the reason is, as you yourself have often told me, that it is a poor land of peasant tenantry. Each little patch of soil means life and love and home. It is its tenant's all, and so, simply and humbly, he works upon it till all is fruitful—all beautiful. How would it be, do you think, were it in the hands of one of your western speculators, with western notions of "improving property," dreaming dreams that here should be a state metropolis, and putting up pretentious villas separated from one another by vacant, weed grown lots? "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."

Do you remember one of the verses in Stephen Crane's "Black Riders"? I have not them by me here, and so cannot quote verbally. But it tells of meeting one, upon the road of life, who looked at him with kindly eyes and bade him show his wares. One by one they were brought forth. One by one the stranger laid them at one side and said of each: "It is a sin." At last he cried "I have none other." Then grew the stranger's eyes more kindly still. "Poor soul," he said.

Suppose that you and I could realize this of ourselves: That there is no one thing in us, least of all that upon which we pride ourselves the most, which, measured by the standards of the life we seek to follow, is not a sin. What would we do? What could we do? Rebellion, grief, self-reproach would be of no avail. We are not other than we are, and have only what we have—and this a sin. I know what you would do. You would fall upon your knees and hide your face before the Master. One by one you would take your sins and lay them at his feet. And prostrate there before him, your face buried in your hands, would sob out the last vestige of yourself, till you were empty of all. Then in that abyss of nothingness, in that empty silence which had been your heart and self, you would find

his hands upon your head, his heart within your own. . . . But, strangest of all, when he bade you rise and go, you would take back, one by one from his hands, the sins which you had laid at his feet,—no longer to be used as sins but as powers; as his gifts to you with which to serve him; or as the soil, rock strewn and overgrown with thorns and thistles, which you were to make fair and fruitful, and where you were to live your life, his tenant.

Within all sin there are life and power. We who have so long suffered sin's dominion know that well. And all life and power are in essence drawn from the Divine. They are the Father's gift to us from his own life. It is only we ourselves who give to life its appearance of duality, or to sin and evil their appearance of separate existence. It is only man that makes the sin and evil, by separating in thought and use the gift of life and power from its source. When we take it back whence it came, give it back to the Master who first gave it us, then again it becomes wholly good.

Choose what sin you will, little or big, and look deep into its heart, and lay your hands upon its inmost essence and the power by which it lives, and turn this power to the Master, and you will find it but a part of your love for him; but an instrument for the doing of his will. Choose that vanity which paralyzed your effort when you tried to write. It was vanity and sin when directed to yourself and coloured by the thought of yourself. But directed to the Master it is but part of your love for him and a part which will make you think no pain too great to serve him as perfectly as in you lies. Choose the power of absorption in your occupations, which now makes you sin daily against Recollection and Detachment. Turn the power of this absorption to the Master and it will keep you ever at his side,—for yours will be the power of the great contemplatives. Sin is always prostitution; and is sin because what it prostitutes is holy.

Could we learn to see thus into the heart of things, and recognize the sin in our virtues and the virtue in our sins; could we see all things in us and in Nature as nothing of themselves but as drawing their life from the one great Source of Life, we should learn both acceptance and humility. And with these, our lives would be transformed. Now we touch reality and beauty and service of the Master in but widely spaced moments. We offer him only what we deem the hill-tops of our lives, where the grape can grow and yield its wine which intoxicates our love of self. The broad valleys we leave rank and untilled; though they should be the corn-lands yielding daily bread. But if we were humble of heart we would see the truth. Each moment of our lives, each mood, each feeling, each circumstance or duty, yes, each sin, has in it the power of a gift to him not

less dear because we deem it small. What is ours in each moment is in truth our *all* in that moment, and being our all it is all we have to give. If we will give it, it will be made beautiful. And thus, beautifying each moment, all will be beautiful, all fruitful, all fair and all useful.

All that I have tried to say to you, you know. Bring it back to your heart and memory; and make it live in you and give you poise and evenness of walk. Take down your volume of "Fragments" and read again the words you once told me were the wisest counsel that you knew.

"You must learn to accept with patience the circumstances of your life. It is not for you to attempt to alter them, but to accept them quietly, and bring out of them all the good possible for yourself and for others. The circumstances really do not matter, since in any we can accomplish our destiny.

"You must not be overborne by discouragement; that arises when results are sought for, and results are not your affair.

"People are like circumstances, you cannot make them over. Accept them. The only way in which you can hope to influence them is by what you are. Accept that also. In other words, disregard all these things, as having to do with the two factors which do not concern you,—circumstances and results; then work ceaselessly, zealously, with endless love and sympathy for all the good you can see. . . .

"And when I say 'accept,' I mean no passive condition, but rather what St. Paul implied, when he said, *'Let us lay aside every weight* and press toward the mark.'"

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men; for whether they interpret well or ill of thee, thou art not therefore another man. . . . And he that neither careth to please men nor feareth to displease them shall enjoy much peace.—Thomas à Kempis.

SAINTLINESS AND BUSINESS

TO-DAY, unquestionably, business in its broadest sense holds the centre of the stage, and absorbs the attention of the greatest men of our time. It is therefore interesting to consider business in relation to and in comparison with other great activities of human beings.

A broad survey of the last twenty-five hundred years shows, I think, that the chief activities of the human race may be divided roughly into seven main categories: War, Religion, Art, Philosophy, Literature, Science and Business.

All of these, and others which I have not enumerated, are present to a greater or lesser extent, at all times, in all developed races. But the history of different races and different epochs shows that different characteristic activities are dominant from time to time.

The ancient Greeks were famed for art and philosophy. A few centuries later, among the Romans, war and business were the chief expressions of the racial activity. Beginning with about the year one thousand the human spirit found its most notable collective expressions in religion and business. The fruit is witnessed in the Crusades and in the founding of the great medieval religious orders: the Cistercians, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. But side by side with this religious revival went the wonderful commercial development of the Genoese and Venetian Republics. Then came the artistic and literary activities which were the characteristic notes of the Renaissance, followed shortly by another religious revival animating the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This started with the German mystics of the fourteenth century, and was carried on by the influence of St. Catherine of Sienna, gradually leading up to the Reformation. This religious epoch was followed by another great commercial period, manifested by the rise of Portugal, Spain, and later of Holland, as the leading bankers and merchants of the world.

A thread of war runs through these centuries, and there were periods when war became the dominant keynote. Nor were philosophy, literature and science entirely neglected. Each had its turn in the sub-cycles.

A little later still we see the philosophical activity of the eighteenth century, which bore fruit in most of the great modern philosophical speculation, gradually leading up to and being followed by great intellectual activity, which has been perhaps the dominant note of the last one hundred and fifty years, as shown through science

and literature; until the impressive progress in the direction of commerce began again to assume the most prominent place in human activity in the generation before this.

As a rule, the man who makes any one of these forms of dominant activity his absorbing occupation has a more or less good natured contempt for the unfortunate individuals who are content to occupy themselves with the other pursuits. The artist scorns the business man; the man of science is often genuinely sorry for what he considers to be the time wasted on religion; while the man of war is sure that his is the only occupation which actually makes its imprint upon human history and accomplishes important results.

In its estimation of these various activities, the prevailing feeling in the world as a whole is colored by those great individuals who at the time are most expressive of its greatest genius. One hundred and fifty years ago a man of business in England, and to a lesser extent in this country, had no social position whatever, and was looked down upon by the more fortunate individuals who derived their living direct from the soil. In this country, for instance, planters of our Southern States, or those in the North who were fortunate enough to have an inherited abundance, were accepted as aristocrats. This feeling, which still survives to a certain extent but which is rapidly disappearing, is characteristic only of a recent period of the world's history. There never were a prouder and more aristocratic lot of men than the great merchant princes of Venice during the Middle Ages. And, as the wheel has turned, nowadays it is again the business man who looks with contempt upon the artist, the writer, the religious devotee, and even the soldier, and he excepts the scientist from his list of drones only because of the latter's occasional usefulness in the sphere of business. It is the day of the business man, and it is his opinion of others which is gradually becoming the world's opinion, because he is the dominant power and holds the stage.

What then is business? In the first place it is interesting to note that it has nothing to do with being busy, which is what most people seem to think. The word business is derived from the old Anglo-Saxon word *bisynes,* which means, to take pains, to take care or trouble; and many people think it is very well named. A survival of this old meaning comes down to us in such an expression as "He made it his business to help his friends," meaning that he took pains, he took care and trouble to help his friends. In the loose way in which the word is being used in this article, it is meant to include all forms of trade or commerce.

Upon analysis all these forms may be found to be within one of three classifications: buying; selling; and buying and selling com-

bined. In the past the esteem in which a business man was held depended upon which one of these classes he belonged to. According to this rapidly dying feeling, the man who was held in the highest public estimation was the one who only bought things: the landed proprietor, or he of inherited wealth and established position, and, most recently, the man of business who has given up all activity except buying. Next in estimation came he who only sold things—usually his services, as the soldier, the lawyer, the doctor and the clergyman. While the lowest stage was occupied by the merchant who both bought and sold, to which last class the manufacturer may to-day be added.

If I am right in my main theme, that the human spirit does express a dominant activity at different times in one or more of the seven characteristic manners, it should follow, I think, that the particular qualities that bring success to individuals occupied in any one of these great pursuits do not differ fundamentally, but, on the contrary, are fundamentally the same, irrespective of their application.

In other words, and in order to focus the matter by using the most seemingly divergent illustration, my point is that the fundamental qualities that make a great business man are precisely the same qualities which make a great saint; hence my title.

If you take two individuals as types: a great saint like St. Francis of Assisi, and a great business man like John D. Rockefeller, and analyze the qualities which made those two men prominent in their respective fields, you will find—astonishing as it may seem—that their powers and their abilities and their faculties were practically the same. They both required faith in their ideal; they required courage to carry it out; an indomitable will to surmount all obstructions; a power over themselves that would sacrifice comfort and all forms of self indulgence; a stern discipline of character that controls all manifestations of self; endurance; patience; intelligence; personal force; and constructive imagination.

So much is this so that I believe that neither St. Francis nor Mr. Rockefeller would have become prominent in their chosen pursuits unless each had had something of all of the qualities of the other, and the qualities which they both had to a supreme degree were, to an astonishing extent, exactly the same.

The fundamental difference between the two men was not in the dynamic powers which they possessed, but in the nature of their vision and of their desire. This determined the direction in which their powers were turned, and the results achieved: in the one case holiness, and in the other money. But though differences of ideal are basic and far reaching, we are not now concerned with the inherent worth or worth-

lessness of the aims men seek, but rather with powers; and my point is, first, that to achieve either of these two ideals, the same great powers are needed; and, second, that the ardent, whole-hearted pursuit of either ideal develops those powers. I believe that if St. Francis had seen no more clearly than Mr. Rockefeller, and had wished to become a great merchant, with the same intensity with which he wished to become a follower of Jesus Christ, he would have been one of the world's famous business men; and that if Mr. Rockefeller could have had St. Francis's vision and had chosen to devote his powers to the following of a religious life, with the same comfort-sacrificing intensity with which he endeavored to become a great business man, we should have had a great modern saint.

Some months ago I had occasion to point out to some of my subordinates what I considered to be some of the fundamental principles upon which modern business should be transacted. I have also been interested for some years in the lives of most of the great saints and have read a great deal about them. I found to my astonishment that in terms of modern business I was laying down rules for the guidance of my subordinates which fundamentally did not differ from the rules which, if I were an abbot of a monastery, I would give to the monks who had confided their spiritual well-being to my care. I must confess that when I realized this I felt that I had made something of a discovery; and since then I have from time to time jotted down a number of rules which seem to me to embody the fundamental principles of business, and which, with very slight paraphrasing, would do for an individual who wanted to devote himself exclusively to a religious life.

We hear a great deal nowadays from the Socialists of the impossibility of the application to business of the Golden Rule, and of other moral and ethical precepts of the Christian religion; but this, of course, is simply nonsense. The Golden Rule is constantly being applied in business, as a decent business man does not expect to receive any better treatment from others than he is willing to give them, and he endeavors, within the limits of his ability, to act according to his ideal, to accord to others that treatment which he would like to receive for himself. In criticizing business and business men from this point of view we must take into account the limitations and difficulties of human nature, and should realize very clearly that just as the average business man does not live up to his ideals, so the average religious man does not live up to his. Otherwise we would all be saints, and we know how few saints there have been.

The trouble is with human nature, and not with the ideals. I

believe that the average of attainment, that is to say, the average approximation to the ideal, is as great in business at the present time, if not greater, than it is in any form of human activity. That there is immense room for improvement is, of course, obvious. That is what the human race is here for, and the fact that at the present time its greatest examples are engaged in business is to my mind very good evidence that it is in business at the present time that we find the most fruitful field for the development of human character.

I append twenty-five rules. I shall not apologize for the colloquial form in which they are expressed, for they are written for practical use in my own organization. If any one wants to take the trouble to compare these rules with the "Imitation of Christ," or with the writings of St. Francis de Sales or Archbishop Fenèlon, he will find them there, and indeed they may be found in any other of the great religious books written for the spiritual guidance of mankind. They do not, of course, pretend to be complete.

1. Do the right thing regardless of what it seems will be the result. Let Providence have some chance to work in your favor. It cannot unless you work in consonance with it.

2. In modern business most men are afraid of an intelligent and progressive assistant or subordinate. This is exactly contrary to the correct principle, for you cannot expect promotion until you have educated an assistant to take your place. It pays to help and to train your subordinates so that they can replace you; then, when a vacancy occurs higher up, you are most likely to be chosen.

3. Never "bluff." Always be prepared to make good on any statement. Do not make any statement you yourself do not believe. You may not know how you will make good, but you must believe that you can and will if necessary.

4. If you want a thing done, do it yourself. Do not send or write. Personal contact is a great force if you are backed by Universal Law, as you will be if you act conscientiously.

5. Do not be afraid to pray for what you want, always with the proviso, "Nevertheless Thy will, not mine, be done," and go after it hard. But be prepared to relinquish it, and all effort after it, the moment you have reason to believe that you are working on the wrong track. "Never give up while there is hope; but hope not beyond reason, for that shows more desire than judgment."

6. Do not take "No" for an answer. People often say "No" without meaning it. Do not take two "No's." But if you get three decided refusals, then accept the refusal and do it so gracefully and cheerfully that you make the man your friend, anxious to find some

other way in which to do what you want. You can often wring victory out of apparent defeat by such means.

7. Be attentive to details. Tie the last string tight. Many important transactions fail, or become compromised and tangled, because, at the moment of victory, when you have gained your main point, you relax and, through good nature, or weakness, or false pity, or any kind of sentiment, you fail to drive home your victory and make it definite and complete. Do not be afraid to follow up and insist upon that last little thing which should be done. It is better to risk apparent complete failure than to compromise with victory for fear you are going too far and using too much pressure, or asking for too much. The trouble is that this last little thing is not insisted upon with the same power and force used with the main point, and your opponent, feeling this slackness in your will, at once gets aggressive in the hope of retrieving his position.

8. Avoid procrastination. Avoid precipitancy. There is a natural time when it is easiest to do anything. That time is usually *now*. The general tendency is to postpone, especially if the task be disagreeable or difficult.

9. Try to avoid thinking of duties as either easy or hard. They are all merely duties and you should not care which you are doing, or think whether it is easy or hard.

10. When you have finished one task and are ready to turn to another, select the hardest one, or the one you least like to do. It is usually the nearest duty. When in doubt always select the hardest.

11. Do not let your mind dwell on what you may have to do tomorrow or at some future time. You may never have to do it. Circumstances may change. Above all avoid anxiety. Anxiety is seeking for results, and results are in the hands of God. We do not know His plan, and can but do our best. It will be a better "best" if we have not impaired our efficiency by anxiety.

12. Remember and act upon the old aphorism, "Be bold: be bold: be not too bold." No great work can be accomplished by the timorous man; yet recklessness must be avoided.

13. Do not be afraid to be kind, generous and obliging. The man you favor may be ungrateful, but others will repay you a hundredfold.

14. Back up your subordinates, and treat their mistakes, if honest mistakes, so leniently that they will always come to you and confess. They must have faith in you, in your fairness, in your justice. But be strict. Do not allow any slackness of rules you have

laid down. Jump on the very first infraction of them. It is easier to do it then than at any future time. Postponement because of a dislike of trouble, or of a scene, always leads to greater trouble and a worse scene.

15. No man is fit to command who has not learned how to obey. Never promote an unruly or fractious man. He will disorganize his department.

16. You cannot expect the respect of your subordinates unless you are worthy of respect. You cannot deceive them—for long. You must be the thing before you can teach it to others.

17. Pay attention to manners;—your own first and then your subordinates. An office takes its tone from its chief. Many an important sale has been made because the buyer was more impressed by the good manners of the salesman than by the merit of the article he came to sell; and no sale was ever lost through being well mannered.

Do not interrupt.

Sit straight.

Listen attentively.

Keep your hands out of your pockets and your cigar out of your mouth.

Show deference to your seniors.

Be good tempered, patient and good humored.

18. Remember that there is no such thing as "Bad news," as "Failure." Things seem so to us because we know only a few of the facts. You can see for yourself that most of the things you tried and failed to do, would have turned out disastrously if you had succeeded in doing them.

19. Be careful and neat in your dress. Avoid extremes. It is better to be under dressed than over dressed. The ideal costume for a business man is one that is not noticed at all.

20. Be controlled in speech, but appear to be careless. Do not volunteer information save for a definite purpose and do not give more information than is asked for or expected.

21. Always talk the language of your hearer. This involves a sympathetic appreciation of your auditor and his peculiarities, and may be done without lowering your own dignity or tone.

22. Do not offer more than the buyer wants at first and do not offer more than he is able to dispose of, or use, or pay for. Always look ahead five years when selling anyone anything and negotiate from that point of view.

23. "Patience and diligence, like Faith, remove mountains." (Penn).

24. "As many hands make light work, so many purses make cheap experiments." (Penn).

Do not try to make all the profit: Let others have their chance and their share; of both the cost and the results.

25. "He that loveth his life shall lose it. He that hateth his life, for my sake, shall keep it unto life eternal."

To sum up, I believe that it is just as possible to become a saint in the market place or in the stock exchange as it is in the cloister or in the cell. I believe that all that is required is to do one's daily work, whatever that may be, from a slightly different point of view, and with a different ideal. I am convinced that this will not militate in any way against what is known as worldly success, but, on the contrary, the carrying out of these ideals in business will lead directly to increased worldly success, and that the modern business man would be wise to realize that, if he chooses to do so, his ordinary circumstances provide him with an exceptionally good oportunity to become a saint as well as a captain of industry; and that success in attaining the one rank may materially aid in attaining the other if the right ideal be preserved and always observed.

C. A. G., Jr.

He who asks a question is good; he who asks seven is better, fourteen, better still. So be that they are questions springing from the heart, not idle ripples on the surface of a restless mind.

Book of Memories.

THREE BOOKS ON THE VEDANTA

1. The System of the Vedanta, by Prof. Paul Deussen.
2. The Philosophy of the Upanishads, by Prof. Paul Deussen.
3. Handbook of the Vedant, by Dr. R. V. Khedkar.

PROFESSOR PAUL DEUSSEN'S books on Indian Philosophy are of high value, both from the character of their author and from their literary and scholarly excellence. Dr. Deussen is a thoroughgoing scholar, thoroughly trained and equipped. Though he is, in a certain sense, a specialist in the study of Indian thought, he is a master of the whole field of philosophical thought and study, and has, for many years and with high distinction, held the chair of philosophy at Kiel University. But we can best illustrate his breadth and depth of view by quotation, from the Introduction to *The System of the Vedanta:*

"The thought that the empirical view of nature is not able to lead us to a final view of the being of things, meets us not only among the Indians but also in many forms in the philosophy of the West. More closely examined this thought is even the root of all metaphysics, so far as without it no metaphysics can come into being or exist. For if empirical or physical investigation were able to throw open to us the true and innermost being of nature, we should only have to continue along this path in order to come at last to an understanding of all truth; the final result would be Physics (in the broader sense, as the teaching of *physis,* nature), and there would be no ground or justification for metaphysics. If, therefore, the metaphysicians of ancient and modern times, dissatisfied with empirical knowledge, went on to metaphysics, this step is only to be explained by a more or less clear consciousness that all empirical investigation and knowledge amounts in the end only to a great deception grounded in the nature of our knowing faculties, to open our eyes to which is the task of metaphysics.

"Thrice, so far as we know, has this knowledge reached conviction among mankind, and each time, as it appears, by a different way, according to conditions of time, national and individual character; once among the Indians, of which we are to speak, again in Greek philosophy, through Parmenides, and the third time in the modern philosophy through Kant.

"What drove the Eleatic sage to proceed beyond the world as *'to me on'* to the investigation of 'the existent' seems to have been the

The System of the Vedanta (published by The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, 1912).

The Philosophy of the Upanishads (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1906).

A Handbook of the Vedant Philosophy and Religion (Kolhapur, 1911).

conception, brought into prominence by his predecessor Xenophanes, of the Unity of Being, that is, the unity of nature (by him called *theos*), the consequence of which Parmenides drew with unparalleled powers of abstraction, turning his back on nature and for that reason also cutting off his return to nature.

"To the same conviction came Kant by quite another way, since with German patience and thoroughness he subjected the cognitive faculties of mankind to a critical analysis, really or nominally only to examine whether these faculties be really the fitting instruments for the investigation of transcendent objects, whereby, however, he arrived at the astonishing discovery that, amongst others, three essential elements of the world, namely, Space, Time and Causality, are nothing but three forms of perception adhering to the subject, or, if this be expressed in terms of physiology, innate functions of the brain; from this he concluded, with incontestable logic, that the world as it is extended in space and time, and knit together in all its phenomena, great and small, by the causal nexus, *in this form* exists only for our intellect, and is conditioned by the same; and that consequently the world reveals to us 'appearances' only, and not the being of 'things in themselves.' What the latter are, he holds to be unknowable, regarding only external experience as the source of knowledge, so long as we are restricted to intellectual faculties like ours.

"These methods of the Greek and German thinkers, admirable as they are, may seem external and cold, when we compare them with the way in which the Indians, as we may assume even in the present condition of research, reached the same concepts. Their pre-eminence will be intelligible when we consider that no people on earth took religion so seriously, none toiled on the way to salvation as they did. Their reward for this was to have got, if not the most scientific, yet the most inward and immediate expression of the deepest secret of being."

This quotation, I think, gives us a measure of Dr. Deussen's mind, its accuracy, breadth and imaginative depth, and also of his thorough training, his close and familiar knowledge of both Greek and modern philosophy, as a preliminary to his study of the ancient texts and philosophic thought of India. Let us now try to get a general idea of his book, *The System of the Vedanta.*

For our purposes, we may consider the material of the Vedanta as consisting of four elements. First, we have the Upanishads, and especially the ten greater and older Upanishads, which go back far into India's past, and which have come down to us associated with the four collections of Vedic hymns. The central heart of the Upanishads consists of spiritual or theosophic dialogues, generally having the form of conversations between a Master and his pupil or pupils, but sometimes bringing in divine personages, such as Yama, lord of death, as instructors

or initiators. The Upanishads contain many passages of singular beauty and power, and are among the noblest and most inspired books in the world; in them, the whole of the Indian wisdom is already contained; later teachers could but expand and comment on them, but in no way departed from this original treasure of wisdom.

The second element of the Vedanta store is the Bhagavad Gita, to which, perhaps, certain other texts in the Mahabharata may be added, such as the Anugita, translated in the Sacred Books of the East series. The Bhagavad Gita gives a warm, personal coloring to the older wisdom, by putting it into the form of a dialogue between the divine teacher, Krishna, and his pupil, Arjuna, whom he initiates into his wisdom, his consciousness and his very being. So full of religious feeling is this book, that many earlier students, with the great German scholar Weber at their head, were persuaded that its essence must have been drawn from the New Testament. But this opinion has few or no supporters to-day.

The third element of the Vedanta is the book of almost cryptic sentences known as the Vedanta Sutras, and attributed by tradition to the sage Badarayana. It is soaked through and through with the spirit of the Upanishads, taking them, indeed, as divine revelation and incontestable truth. The Bhagavad Gita also it accepts, but as holy tradition rather than revelation. This strangely formed book, strange at least to the Western mind, is one among half a dozen similar text-books, belonging to half a dozen Indian schools of philosophy and psychology, of which the Sankhya and, even more, the Yoga school, must be known at least by name to many of our readers. It is divided into four books of sutras, or thread-verses, which, taken together, sum up the whole system of the Vedanta, resting always on the Vedic revelation, the Upanishads.

But, just as is the case with the Yoga system of Patanjali, these sutras are practically unintelligible as they stand; no one, reading them for the first time, taken by themselves, could make much out of them, or at all determine the fulness of their meaning. Indeed, they seem to have been composed in order that they might be unintelligible without the help of a teacher, in possession of the living tradition and body of knowledge out of which they grew, and whose essence they express; they are, in fact, only for duly qualified pupils, accepted by a teacher, who, from his own knowledge, adds to the meagre outline the warmth and color which are needed to make the system intelligible, living, inspiring.

In the case of the Vedanta Sutras, or the Brahma Sutras, as they are also called, this teacher is the great and luminous sage, Shankaracharya, one of the loftiest and clearest souls humanity has ever produced, a true master of masters. Shankaracharya had already commented on the Upanishads, at least on the ten greatest of them, and on the Bhagavad Gita, if, as the present writer supposes, the Commentary on the Sutras was the crown and end of his work. He had also written

short original works, in verse or prose, such as the Crest Jewel of Wisdom, the Awakening to the Self, the Discernment between Self and Not-Self, and several more. So at last, after having gathered together and illuminated the whole body of older wisdom, on which the Sutras rest, Shankaracharya turned to these, and wrote a continuous commentary on them, which is, one may believe, the high water mark of pure intellectual thought, the most perfect piece of reasoning, illumined by high intuition and vision, that the world has ever seen. It is hardly too much to say that the Commentary makes the Sutras; that, without the Commentary, the Sutras would be dull and inert. Indeed, we cannot think of the Sutras without the Commentary; they are but the pegs on which Shankaracharya has hung his luminous disquisitions.

Now for Professor Deussen's part. He first made himself thoroughly familiar with the Upanishads, in the original, be it understood, for Dr. Deussen is a fine Sanskrit scholar; then he went on to the Sutras, with the Commentary, and with wonderful skill, patience, knowledge and philosophic depth, penetrated to the innermost meaning of both, at the same time analysing and arranging the material of the Commentary, tabulating, looking up and verifying quotations, counting words almost, with marvellous fidelity, scholarly honesty, and exemplary intelligence. Later, he published a continuous translation of the Sutras with the Commentary, but in the present book he does what is, in reality, a much harder thing: he takes the material of the Commentary, and to some extent re-arranges it, in such a form as to make it more intelligible and acceptable to our Western minds; he gives literal and most faithful translations of the most vital passages; he adds much illuminating comment of his own, comparing the Indian ideas with those of the West, from the time of Plato to our own day; and finally, he inserts the great Upanishad passages on which the whole system rests, making his own translations, which are as eloquent as they are faithful.

A necessarily brief review cannot, of course, convey the substance of a book like this. It must suffice to say that the great divisions of the work, after a long and valuable Introduction, are, first, Theology, or the Doctrine of Brahman, the Eternal; second, Cosmology, or the doctrine of the World; third, Psychology, or the Doctrine of the Soul; fourth, Sansara, or the Doctrine of the Transmigration of the Soul, or, as we should say, the teaching of Reincarnation; and, fifth, Moksha, or the Teaching of Liberation.

In order to give a concrete example of Dr. Deussen's method, let me quote a passage from the fourth part, substituting the word "reincarnation" for "transmigration," as being more familiar to our ears:

The section is headed: "No Reincarnation from the Esoteric Standpoint." Professor Deussen writes: "From what has been said it is clear that, in the Theory of Liberation to which our last part will be

devoted, we shall again meet with the twofold doctrine that we have followed out in detail as the lower and higher knowledge in Theology, and as the empirical and metaphysical standpoint in Cosmology and Psychology; while in the present part, on the contrary, which deals with reincarnation, we shall encounter only the lower, exoteric, not the higher, esoteric, doctrine which puts precisely in the place of this pilgrimage of the soul, the knowledge of the soul's identity with Brahman (the Eternal), through which liberation is gained at once, so that from the standpoint of the higher knowledge there can be no question of anything like reincarnation. Accordingly the reality of the *Sansara* (the cycle of rebirth) stands or falls with the empirical reality of the world; as the latter is a mere illusion, so also are the ideas as to the former not so much, as with Plato, *eikotes muthoi,* but rather a continuation of that illusion into the domain of the transcendent; the question remains open, however, how far our author's mind, deeply embued as it was with the belief in reincarnation according to the general views of his people, reached a clear scientific consciousness of the mythical character of the doctrine of reincarnation."

Readers must bear in mind that, for Dr. Deussen, "mythical" means "as real, or as unreal, as the visible world"; for him, reincarnation is of a piece with that world, and therefore real to the consciousness to which the world is real. With this is to be contrasted the transcendental reality of the soul, one with the Eternal.

We quote one more passage, that which concludes Professor Deussen's Short Survey of the Vedanta System, a very valuable summary of the book:

"Knowledge consists in the immediate intuition (*anubhava*) of the identity of the soul with Brahman (the Eternal). The works of him who has attained this and with it the conviction of the unreality of the world of plurality and transmigration, are annihilated and in the future cleave to him no more. This annihilation refers just as much to good as to evil works, for both demand retribution and therefore do not lead beyond *Sansara* (the cycle of rebirth). He on the other hand who has attained knowledge has won the conviction—'that Brahman (the Eternal) the nature of which is opposed to the nature, previously considered by me to be true, of agent and enjoyer, which is of its own nature in all time, past, present and future, non-agent and non-enjoyer, that Brahman (the Eternal) am I; therefore I never was agent and enjoyer, and I am not so now, nor shall I ever be!' With the unreality of activity the unreality of the body which exists as the fruit of works is recognized; therefore he who has attained knowledge is as little affected by the sufferings of his own body as by the sufferings of another; and he who feels pain, has verily not yet attained full knowledge.

"Even as for the man who has attained knowledge, there is no

longer a world, a body or suffering, there is also no longer prescribed action. But he will not therefore do evil; for that which is the presupposition of all action, good and evil—illusion—has been annihilated. It is a matter of indifference if he does works or not; whether he does them or not, they are not his works, and cleave to him no more.

"Knowledge burns the seed of works so that no material is at hand to cause a rebirth. On the other hand knowledge cannot annihilate works the seed of which has already germinated—those from which the present life is put together. This is why the body, even after the awakening (*prabodha*) is complete, continues to exist for awhile, just as the potter's wheel goes on revolving even when the vessel which it supported is completed. This continuance is however a mere appearance; the possessor of knowledge cannot destroy it, but it cannot deceive him any more either; just so the man with diseased eyes sees two moons but knows that in reality there is only one there.

"After the works whose fruit has not yet begun to appear have been destroyed by knowledge, and after those, the fruit of which is the present existence, have by completion of this present life come to an end, with the moment of death full and eternal liberation comes to him who possesses knowledge; 'his vital spirits withdrew not; the Eternal he is and into the Eternal he is resolved.'

'As rivers run and in the deep
'Lose name and form and disappear,
'So goes, from name and form released,
'The wise man to the Deity.' "

So far Professor Deussen and the great Shankara. I feel that I am doing them both grave injustice by this piecemeal quotation, which may produce an impression of dryness almost, that the whole work would completely remove. Shankaracharya is, for me, the greatest of all Masters of the Mind; he has, indeed, conquered and circumvented the mind at every turning, making a slave, nay, even a most effective servant and ally of that power which, for so many teachers, has been ceaselessly reprobated, as the Slayer of the Real. Shankara has shown how to draw the grains of gold from the matrix of the mind, to make the mind the door-keeper of the soul. And Professor Deussen is his prophet, a worthy, enthusiastic and effective prophet, who has added every fruit of thorough training and utmost effort to great natural and inborn gifts.

We come now to the second book on our list, also by Professor Deussen. It is entitled *The Philosophy of the Upanishads,* and is one volume of a complete series on "The Religion and Philosophy of India," which, in its turn, is the second part of Professor Deussen's "General History of Philosophy." This is, in truth, Cyclopean building. Professor

Deussen has taken to heart, and acted on, the old Indian admonition: "Follow Wisdom as though you were immortal and eternal; do your duty *as though Death already had you by the hair!*" Therefore Dr. Deussen has planned largely, and gone instantly to work.

The book which we have already noticed preceded by many years this book on the Upanishads, and was, indeed, the first great achievement of its author, which was the making of him as a student and an authority, the foundation-stone of a great career,—using the word in an entirely worthy sense. It is the richer, fuller work, and, it seems to me, much closer to the subject than the book on *The Philosophy of the Upanishads;* but I speak here with many reservations, as one who has a view of the theme in hand of such defined nature as, perhaps, in some degree to unfit him for quite impersonal and objective judgment of another man's work in the same field.

Frankly admitting this disability at the outset, let me try to make clear in what way the work under consideration seems to me to be limited. But first a word as to its great qualities. Professor Deussen published, as we saw, an admirable translation of the Vedanta Sutras, with the Commentary of Shankaracharya: a translation in every way adequate and satisfactory. This is, as we saw, a work quite distinct from *The System of the Vedanta,* though covering much of the same ground. But he has done a great deal more; he has translated the Bhagavad Gita, and translated it with admirable fidelity and sympathy. There remains an even greater work: his translation of the Upanishads, which is beyond all praise, for accurate and adequate scholarship. It is the best thing of the kind in any Western tongue, and the most trustworthy. Strictly speaking, the book which we are now reviewing is a commentary on that translation.

As such a commentary, it is, first, accurate, then sympathetic, then lucid, and, best of all, enthusiastic. Those who are acquainted with the older book, which we first noticed, will find in this newer work the same familiar framework: the division into Theology, Cosmology, Psychology and Eschatology, the last being the twofold teaching of Reincarnation and Liberation. Here, it seems to me, we get the limitation of the work. For this fourfold arrangement is not really the order which is inherent in the Upanishads themselves; it is rather an order deduced from the Vedanta Sutras with their commentary; an order, that is, belonging not to the Upanishads, but to the Brahmanical system of argumentative and analytical philosophy which grew out of the study of the Upanishads by Brahmans of logical and systematic habit of thought. But, if the present reviewer be right, the Upanishads, at least the greatest of them, are not Brahmanical at all, nor are they works of systematic philosophy, or speculative works in any sense. I believe them to belong, not to the Brahmans, but to the red Rajputs, and to be, not theological speculations,

but dramatic books of the Mysteries; text-books of Mystery dramas, of ceremonies actually performed, and having a deep and living significance.

Therefore the limitation of Professor Deussen's work on the Upanishads, in the view of the present writer, which is put forth with all due reservation, inheres in the fact that he does not clearly recognize their character and source, the race from which they sprang, and the genius of that race, which was mystical, of the will, and not speculative, of the intellect. Yet Professor Deussen has more than an inkling of the relation of the Brahmans to the Upanishads. Thus we find him writing (p. 396-7):

"The Upanishads (apart from the later and less important books) have been handed down to us as Vedanta, *i. e.*, as the concluding part of the Brahmanas and Aranyakas, which teach and expound allegorically the ritual of sacrifice. They are nevertheless radically opposed to the entire Vedic sacrificial cult, and the older they are the more markedly does this opposition declare itself. "He who worships another deity (than the Atman, the self) and says 'It is one, and I am another,' is not wise. But he is like a house-dog of the gods. Just, then, as many house-dogs are of use to men, so each individual man is useful to the gods. If one house-dog only is stolen it is disagreeable, how much more if many! Therefore it is not pleasing to them that men should know this!" . . .

"According to these testimonies, which carry all the greater weight because they have reached us through the Brahmans themselves, the Brahmans had received the most important elements of the science of the Atman first from the Kshatriyas, and then in course of time had attached them to their own Vedic curriculum, so that the Upanishads became what they now are, the *Vedanta,* ('end of the Veda')."

Here is the clue, but perhaps Professor Deussen does not see how far it leads. He hardly sees that the difference between Brahman and Kshatriya is something much more than a difference of caste or class; it is a difference of color, of race, of civilization, of spiritual ray and pedigree.

But we need not press the point. Given this limitation, if we are right concerning it, the book is excellent, trustworthy and illuminating, and both author and translator (Rev. A. S. Geden, M.A.) are to be congratulated.

We come now to the third book on our list, the *Handbook of the Vedant,* by Dr. Khedkar of Kolhapur, in Bombay Presidency. It is by no means such a weighty treatise as Dr. Deussen's two books, yet it has both interest and value for the student of the Vedanta; interest, because it represents the thought of one of the direct lines of the Indian pupils of Shankaracharya, and valuable, from its perfect sincerity and

earnestness. There are many things in this book which win one's heart; for example, the conviction, clearly stated, that the Vedanta is a religion as well as a philosophy. Dr. Khedhar says:

"Unfortunately a very wrong impression is abroad that the Vedanta is a dry philosophy and not a religion, so most people have hitherto ignored it. We are ready to admit that it is their fault; but the actual, moral and political changes which have occurred in India during the last few centuries, the selfishness of some of the Mathas (colleges of philosophy), religious societies and Vaidic Brahmans, and the heavy fetters of caste principles have greatly to account for this misappreciation of the value of the Vedant. . . . The principles of the Vedant philosophy and religion, being of universal nature, impartial and definite, can be followed out in any religion."

That, it seems to the present reviewer, is the best thing in the book.

What else can one expect to find there? It is not, strictly speaking, a Handbook; that is, a book which will give, to one coming fresh to the subject for the first time, a practical working knowledge of the Vedanta philosophy. It is, far rather, a handbook of some terms and important phrases of the Vedanta, with suggestive illustrative quotations, in Sanskrit and in Devanagari character,—which gives the book an aspect likely to frighten timid readers.

The truth is, that Dr. Khedkar is far from realizing how deeply his own mind and nature are saturated with the method of the Indian philosophical schools, that genius for systematization which has been, for many centuries, the great power of the Brahman culture. Dr. Khedkar writes English so well that we may say he has a very thorough Western training of a certain kind; he is also learned in Western medicine, which means also some mastery of cognate sciences, like chemistry. And his medical training crops out amusingly, as where, speaking of religious observances, he writes (p. 17, part II), "A dualist swallows the above pills of admonitions under the hope of future rewards."

Yet under this surface of Westernism, Dr. Khedkar is deeply and wholeheartedly Indian; so completely so, indeed, that this is likely to make him a less effective interpreter of India and Indian thought to Westerners, whose own thought and whose difficulties still remain outside his consciousness. Yet the book is sterling, and of great interest and value to every student of the Vedanta. C. J.

What the superior man is seeking is in himself; what the mean man seeks is in others.

It does not afflict me that men do not know me; it does afflict me that I do not know men.—"Wisdom of Confucius."

THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE

IX

Tennyson and Browning

TENNYSON and Browning have often been contrasted. Tennyson, it is said, is an artist who delights with picturesque effects. Browning is a philosopher, and supplies thought, high and obscure. This is hardly fair either to philosophy and art or to the two men. One would not like to think that philosophers busy themselves with activities that are bare of the graces we associate with life. What more catholic and passionate lover of Beauty shall we find than Plato? And how Beauty shines from all his writing! Or, the philosopher who is the hero of the New Testament records—his poetic symbols are so much a matter of human-nature's daily food that the world has forgotten the truths they veil—the Bread of Heaven and Life-giving Water. Art and Philosophy are not mutually exclusive. They are planes that converge as they ascend; at the top, they meet and coincide. So it is wrong to set Tennyson and Browning in sharp contrast, one as a rhetorician and one as a thinker. Each aspired to be poet and philosopher. In measure as they failed to attain their ideal their differences are striking. As poets and philosophers they sing the old melodies in new keys—they paint in new shades of the old colors.

Tennyson did what Milton and Wordsworth longed to do, and what Mallory had done charmingly in prose—he took the life and death of King Arthur for the central work of his life. There are many short, early lyrics that anticipate the *Idylls,* such as "The Lady of Shalott." As a young man, Tennyson brooded over the fate of "mythic Uther's deeply wounded son," and wrote some of his loveliest lines to set forth the splendor and the beauty of Camelot. At the same time that he was thus saturating himself with the heroic legends of the Round Table, he was experiencing and was writing of the pain and hopelessness that arise when a man is brought, before the development of spiritual vision, to the necessity of observing the changes and chances of life. But Tennyson's experience was not that of Hamlet or of Matthew Arnold's hero, Empedocles. Both those fictitious heroes are vanquished by Life; in its workings their minds discover nothing but cruel caprice. Whenever Tennyson approached the place of defeat, a voice, "a little whisper silver-clear." made itself heard through the frenzy of his mind.

> Like an Æolian harp that wakes
> No certain air, but overtakes
> Far thought with music that it makes:
> Such seem'd the whisper at my side.

Tennyson wrote frequently, though never very happily, of this keen struggle of man with his mind, and of the final rescue by the awakened soul. It is this struggle that is the subject of *In Memoriam,* a series of lyrics that describe his experience during the years that followed the death of his friend, Arthur Hallam. Over and over in the poem the question is asked why death must come and what life means. The mind has no answer. But in the end, a warmth within the breast melts the freezing reason's colder part, and Tennyson attains to knowledge. The living Soul is flashed upon him; in communion with the Soul he is whirled to empyreal heights, and catches the pulsations of the world. On that height the jarring discords of chance blend into the harmonies of Life.

> Æonian music measuring out
> The steps of Time—the shocks of chance—
> The blows of death.

Tennyson's two subjects of study—the splendor of chivalry, and the struggle that goes on within man—at last converged and united in the *Idylls of the King.* Through inward experience he came to see that the splendor of castle walls and snowy summits old in story is the faintest shadow of Immortal Radiance; and that shattering trumpet and clanging battle-axe are symbols that present outwardly the old Arjuna contest of the lower and higher natures. He penetrated to the true significance of the old legends, and rewrote them to give little pictures* of the Soul in its arduous combat. His story, Tennyson says, is an old imperfect thing, "new-old," and pictures *"Sense at war with Soul."* Arthur, the King, is the Soul, the Deliverer and Saviour of those who perish between the man and beast. The lower nature hates the King, his friends and his ideals; for his manners are different, sweet not bestial, and his triumph means the defeat of the material self. So as the story shifts from the King and his faithful knights to the opposing petty chieftains, one passes from certain knowledge of the Soul as a divine power to mere rumor of its existence and hatred of it as something baleful. At times, the King is merely phantom, haze-girt; again, the solid earth becomes as nothing while the King stands out in heaven crowned. The same diversity of opinion exists in regard to the King's dwelling-place, the city Camelot. Those who have sworn allegiance to Arthur, and over whom there had fallen a likeness to himself, know how to come together with him in his city, rich in emblems. Those who have

* Idyll is derived from the Greek *eidolon,* an image.

not entered through the strange gate, but abide without among the cattle of the field, can see no such city nor King, but scoffingly call it glamor and mist. It is the taking of the vows and entrance within the gate that makes the difference. Approaching the gate, one comes face to face with the Lady of the Lake, who stands upon a stone carved as a rippling and ever-fleeting wave, and whose robes are as flowing water; water drops from her hands also. In one of them she holds a sword, in the other a censer, and her arms, outstretched cross-wise, support all the arch of the gate. Water, it has been said, symbolises the spiritual element (the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life); and the symbology here would seem to be that of the Baptismal Service—that one enters into the Kingdom through the birth of the new man; enters under the cross, by means of the sword and the censer, combat and prayer. The Lady of the Lake, as Spiritual Essence, seems to be the emblem also of the Wisdom Religion. She dwells down in the deep that is calm whatsoever storms may shake the world, and when her lips move, the sound is as "the voice of many waters." It is she who gives to Arthur his jewelled sword that bewilders heart and eye. For on one side of the blade there is engraved, in the ancientest language known to men, the motto "Take me," while on the other side, in vernacular speech, is the contradictory command "Cast me away!" That is an eloquent illustration of the Theosophical attitude toward religion—ardor, tolerance, detachment. The religion into which we are born contains part of the ancientest wisdom known to men. It is the sword with which we are to fight. It is not to be surrendered until it has wrought its work; then, for all its jewelled hilt it must be returned to its source, in the deep. The three Queens who stand silent near the throne at Arthur's coronation, and who conduct him to Devachan, may perhaps typify the higher spiritual and super-spiritual forces, the Triad, as distinguished from the lower Quaternary. The celebrated lines that describe the birth of Arthur are as full of significance as of beauty. The night is one "in which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost." The waves of the sea are so great that the dragon ship on which the babe is carried seems to move through the heavens, "so high it sails upon the deep." The wave that bears the child to the shore "was in a flame" (this recalls the Scriptual words about the birth from water and from fire).

The Idyl *Gareth and Lynette,* the first in order of the legends—Tennyson makes the *Coming of Arthur* and the *Passing of Arthur* framework for the whole—depicts the first test of the aspirant; it is concerned with the vow of Obedience. Gareth, a noble youth, chasing the deer in far-off forests, hears a vague rumor of Arthur's court, and is filled with longing to travel thither, to leave his youthful

sport and find a man's work. His mother, reluctant to lose him, craftily demands a proof of his obedience and love for her, before he shall present himself to the King as an aspirant for knighthood. She demands that he shall go disguised to Arthur's court, and shall hire himself to serve for a year among the kitchen scullions without any mention of name or lineage. To her surprise his aspiration was genuine, and he promises compliance with her demands. ("He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.") He proceeds to the court, obtains a post in the kitchen and,

> bow'd himself
> With all obedience to the King, and wrought
> All kind of service with a noble ease
> That graced the lowliest act in doing it.

Freed, at last, from hateful kitchen vassalage, the King sets him his first exploit that, if won, shall bring the accolade. This exploit is to fight with four false knights, Morning Star, Noon Sun, Evening Star, and Night or Death. It is "the war of Time against the soul of man." Gareth overthrows the Morning and Evening Stars, and Noon, and then faces Death.

> High on a night-black horse, in night-black arms,
> With white breast-bone, and barren ribs of Death,
> And crown'd with fleshless laughter.

With one blow Gareth splits the skull; and suddenly there steps out from all those ghastly trappings, a blooming boy "fresh as a flower new born." Thus the first exploits end.

If we read on after the legend of *Gareth and Lynette* on the look-out for other spiritual adventures, symbolically presented, we shall be disappointed. Tennyson had not sufficient knowledge of the Path to narrate the Soul's progress along it, point by point. He was therefore unable to write an epic like Dante's or even a work as satisfactory as Bunyan's. In the *Idylls,* we have not a record of orderly advance along the Path, its pitfalls and victories, but glimpses only. After *Gareth and Lynette,* most of the legends are void of spiritual content. They contribute nothing to the great end Tennyson set himself—"Soul at war with sense," but serve only a dramatic purpose, *i. e.,* the downfall of the semi-historic Arthur through the unfaithfulness of the Queen and Lancelot. *Geraint and Enid, Lancelot and Elaine* are pretty stories, well told; but they have none of the interest that fills the opening and closing poems and *The Holy Grail.* In the Idyl of *The Holy Grail,* Tennyson again, as it were, remembers his purpose, pulls himself together, and writes of the inward life.

The Holy Grail would be more satisfactory, if it could be detached from its framework and read as something quite apart from the

stories that record Arthur's career. For in this idyl Tennyson tries to bend spiritual truth to serve "party" purposes. He cannot distort the truth, but his poem gets twisted. Tennyson here reaches the point of setting forth the function of Meditation in the Soul's career. That function, all the teachers of spiritual science declare, is to lead the soul consciously into communion with the Master. Tennyson symbolises Meditation under the quest of the Grail. Galahad finds it, and with it, Heaven. He is crowned King in the spiritual city.

> Thrice above him all the heavens
> Open'd and blazed with thunder such as seem'd
> Shoutings of all the sons of God.

Before the victorious consummation, however, Galahad experienced many adventures. As he drew nearer to the object of his quest, his power for activity became greater.

> In the strength of this I rode,
> Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
> And past thro' Pagan realms, and made them mine,
> And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore them down,
> And broke thro' all, and in the strength of this
> Come victor.

Such victories, one learns from spiritual teachers, always proceed from success in meditation; indeed, it has been said, all the activities of the Christian Church, have been made possible through the inner work done by the contemplative members of the Church. So far, then, Tennyson gives a fresh illustration of universal truth. But just here the unhappy twist gets into the idyl. During Tennyson's period of work, the long contention between High and Low in the English Church was acute. Doctor Pusey was doing his best to restore to Protestantism much of what had been lost at the Reformation; he was teaching the invincible power of prayer, and was forming little communities of women who desired to follow the religious life. There were many upright and earnest men who could not see the wisdom of Dr. Pusey's endeavors. It seemed a waste of time, a waste of life, to devote one's energy to learning *how to pray,* when on all sides in the world there was so much reform needing *to be done.* Some of Tennyson's close personal friends, Frederick D. Maurice, for example, were of the party opposed to Pusey and the Oxford men. And Tennyson, unhappily, pictured this divided state of the English Church, along with the deeper teaching of the old Grail legend. It is this second purpose that makes the idyl unsatisfactory. The heroic Galahad symbolises the High Churchmen of Oxford. Galahad is successful, yet his success maims the King's Order. There is the distortion which truth suffers on the mental plane. The mind cannot see that prayer and meditation, instead of being withdrawal from

active work, are more effectual methods of work. What the idyl awkwardly shows is that through meditation (true meditation) the Soul's advance is thwarted—a proposition contrary to all teaching.

Although it was Tennyson's purpose thus to show that Galahad's victory hastened Arthur's defeat, all unconsciously, in the end, he brings the King himself to acknowledge that failure results from confidence placed in man rather than in God.

> I have but stricken with the sword in vain;
> And all whereon I lean'd in wife and friend
> Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
> Reels back into the beast and is no more.

And the King's last words, as his mind clouds, are to beseech the prayers of those who remain.

> More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of.
> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Thus defeated, Arthur passes off into Devachan—"the island valley of Avilion." There he will heal him of his wound, then come again into the world to continue his journey along the Path.

While there is unquestionably a mystical vein in Browning's work, it is meagre. He was poet enough intuitively to apprehend a real world lying within the world of appearance, but though its splendor flashed at times upon him, it never kindled his will to forsake the world and seek the Path. Consequently, it is scarcely possible to speak of him as a spiritual teacher. The enormous bulk of his writing has only intellectual interest. There are two or three short poems, however, that show insight below the surface of the intricate human relations in which he was usually absorbed. "Abt Vogler" is one of those poems. The title is the name of an eighteenth century musician, and Browning's poem represents him at the conclusion of an organ improvisation. In the improvisation, Vogler succeeded in rising above his usual plane of consciousness, and in entering for a time into the Immortal Realm. There he sees mighty Presences whom he cannot name; he thinks they may be men destined for some remote future age of the world when conditions will be better than at present; or they may be the souls of the wonderful dead. He doesn't know. The vision ends with the music, but, when the wonder is gone, the musician still retains belief in the reality of what he has seen. He is convinced that he shall come again into that immortal world, and he returns to the common duties of life ("The C Major of this life") as the best preparation for approach to the Gates. In the poem, "Saul," Brown-

ing invents such living symbols for certain constitutive elements of man that, as in many other writings, the symbols have been accepted as reality itself. The poem, in truth, is not concerned with the historic Saul and David, but with the lower and higher mind of man. Saul sits moodily "more black than blackness," "drear and stark, blind and dumb." David, the higher mind, tries to rouse Saul from this gloomy lethargy, by setting before him the duties and achievements of human life. He succeeds only partially; at last, in a moment of inspiration, David sings of the divine, immortal life. This promise of new life restores Saul, *i.e.*, it effects the transfer of consciousness from the Saul plane to the David plane. For, at the last song, Saul disappears from the poem—only David remains,

> witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and to right,
> Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen.

Two other poems should be mentioned as proof that Browning is not devoid of the spiritual element. These are "Rabbi Ben Ezra" and "The Boy and the Angel." In both he teaches the profound lesson that circumstances, however unfavorable they seem, are really blessed opportunities for travelling the shortest way to God.

> He fixed thee 'mid this dance
> Of plastic circumstance.
> This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:
> Machinery just meant
> To give thy soul its bent,
> Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

"The Boy and the Angel" is a charming little parable on the same theme. Its central lines recall the familiar words of the Paradiso *"la sua volontade."*

> He did God's will; to him, all one
> If on the earth or in the sun.

No Theosophist, I am sure, will find fault with a paradoxical statement to the effect that the very meagreness of the spiritual element in Browning's work has given him a larger influence than were his teaching less incomplete. The bulk of his writing, *The Ring and The Book* for example, furnishes material for ceaseless grinding out by the argumentative mind. But, in the course of their reading, Browning's devotees come upon poems like those that have now been mentioned. They are too loyal to throw out these poems as temporary aberration of their idol; they work over them, and the meaning penetrates, sometimes deeply. Thus the teaching which they have received in a small measure prepares many for deeper and ampler instruction. And many have taken their first step away from the world toward the threshold of the inner Kingdom through the inspiration found in Browning's lines. C.

SOME ASPECTS OF THEOSOPHY

As Seen by a New Member of the Society

VI

THE MATTER OF "MIRACLES," AND COROLLARY TROUBLES

A THEN casual inquirer into Theosophy found his first interest vicarious and not personal. He was interested, that is to say, in the fact that certain remarkable people, whom he had always respected and was beginning to learn to love, belonged to the T. S. and were palpably putting its tenets into practice in their lives. No especial interest was taken in the teachings of the Society except as shown in the effect upon these active members. But with a surer knowledge of what they were manifesting in their relations with the world came a growth of admiration and a possibly natural curiosity to know what it was that influenced them so patently and to such good purpose.

Based on an unconscious desire, which was only consciously expressed by the curiosity to know more, the inquirer asked for some books on the subject. He was not wise enough to ask for the oral instruction he might have had and which has since been given him with a patience and generosity upon which he is always tempted to dwell. He was still arrogant in his egotism and in his confidence that he could decide for himself. He was possibly aroused intellectually, but spiritually his faculties were dormant, as he can now see.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett's *The Occult World* was recommended. This opportunity for enlightenment was rejected, however, by an intellect that was not only arrogant in its egotism but was stupid in its self-sufficiency. Forgetting what he had seen of the Fellowship that the T. S. could produce, he left the book unfinished and his interest dropped because of the attention given to the occult phenomena or "miracles" produced by Madame Blavatsky and others. All interest in matters Theosophical was gone for the time being—a retreat now regretted and lamented as a lost opportunity for advancement and (much more important) for sharing this new found joy.

Death, the great Awakener to the need for Theosophy, Whose call cannot be left unanswered, was sent into the life of the former inquirer, and his lazy curiosity was metamorphosized, as it revived, into a hunger for spiritual food. The first satisfaction came from *Meditation, Light*

on the Path and *Fragments*. This satisfaction has never ceased but grows with each of many rereadings. And each reading brings out some new aspect, some new treasure. Such books can never satiate the spiritual hunger but, unless it exists, they were apparently better unread.

Similar has been the experience with *The Occult World*. It has been read again and again. Out of the quotations it gives from the Master K. H., fresh knowledge and fresh inspiration have been gained each time they have been reread. Above all else has been the growth in love and reverence for their Author, all inexplicably felt, from the very first, to be a real, a gracious and a helping Friend, yet never seen or heard from to his admirer's conscious knowledge.

At the first reading these quotations, now recognized as so marvelous and so helpful, had not been reached when the attempt to read was abandoned. Later they made little impression. It was not until the stumbling block had been passed and, indeed, had been accepted as a veritable stepping-stone that the full benefit from the book began to be felt.

The stumbling block that stopped the first reading was, as has been said, the matter of the "miracles" or occult phenomena produced by Madame Blavatsky and others. Later these miracles impressed while depressing the seeker. When the book was taken up anew the attempt was made to skip them but they could not be avoided. They possessed an uncanny interest as they irritated. With the sublime philosophy gradually being unfolded through the gracious mercy and loving kindness of an almost too patient preceptor it seemed so unnecessary, so unkind that such a debatable minor proposition should keep cropping up. One did not want to have to believe that such things could be done. Why were they so obtrusive when belief in them was not proving necessary to one's growing appreciation of the wonder and beauty and grateful truth of the philosophy of Theosophy—as the student would then have expressed it. It was later that he was to sense that Theosophy is "being, not merely believing," and that this is why those most active in the T. S. and most theosophical in their lives call themselves "students of Theosophy" and never use the term "Theosophists" to describe themselves.

Since one digression has proved irresistible perhaps another will be permitted. The new member had not then realized that the avowed principles of the Society are literally applied in practice and that the tolerance promised is actually extended. Persons who have an opportunity to know the Society sometimes balk because of a curious misconception that they must believe something other than what is set forth in the "Objects" and in the Constitution. The T. S. enforces no beliefs upon its members. The struggle with the matter of "miracles" was only a personal reaction from one aspect of Theosophy. The experience is set forth here in

the hope that it may prove of interest and even of help to those passing through a similar reaction.

If one wanted to, one could entirely ignore the whole question of occult phenomena and still remain an active member, always provided that one allowed others the same freedom of belief. It is this truly Christlike but hardly conventionally-Christian attitude that may be one explanation of why so many have found that their membership in the T. S. has drawn them back into a church membership which they had previously dropped.

In considering the vexing problem of occult phenomena the student's first stage on the intellectual plane was to reject them flatly and in thus dismissing them to say, "It is what Madame Blavatsky set forth that counts—not who she was or what she did." Her teachings in Theosophy as a religious philosophy were seemingly unanswerable and certainly were soul-satisfying, enlightening and helpful. Why waste energy over the non-essential? A one-armed gypsy boy might pull one out of a bottomless slough—would he not be as much of a rescuer as a whole and reputable citizen?

An attempt was accordingly made to forget Madame Blavatsky while joyously accepting the Blavatskian philosophy, as it might have been called at that time. But, as has been found by many a person who has never even seen her, the personality of Madame Blavatsky cannot thus be ignored even to this day. It soon proved impossible to rest satisfied with saying: "What earthly difference does it make whether she did or did not 'precipitate' a tea cup under the roots of a tree or bring back Mrs. Hume's missing brooch—it is what she said and wrote that counts." And, *en passant,* it may be said that this is true—since joining the T. S. the student has found many a true but unconscious student of Theosophy who had never heard of the Society or of Madame Blavatsky but who has possibly "carried over" intuitive knowledge from some former incarnation—and here again, it may be remarked this is a personal belief, there being no official T. S. belief on this matter, or any other.

Unimportant as it had seemed, unnecessary as it had proved to acceptance of Theosophical teachings, there soon raged over that miserable tea cup an internal storm reproducing that which swept over Anglo-India in 1880. Even though not a test of membership in the T. S. yet in the case of one seeker for light the point had been reached when the storm must be braved and beaten down or else he would have to drop back before it and out of the ranks of the T. S., with which he had just begun to consider himself as aligned.

The question had to be faced: "Could such a thing be done?" It was a long and a hard fight and it was, paradoxically enough, not a conscious act of faith but a seemingly rational act of mental consciousness that forced the utterance of a reluctant "Yes," a decision arrived at

after studying without prejudice those quotations from the Master K. H. If only more "rationalists" would read them with open minds how much easier it would be for the hard-minded to reach some understanding of the common sense basis that actually underlies occult science. But this is a vain regret. One must wait for interior readiness.

It was finally accepted by the student that one who had attained to the higher powers latent in man could do seemingly miraculous things without contravening the Law—in other words they need not be considered any longer as "miracles" but rather as demonstrations of powers that are strictly speaking natural, even if four dimensional and therefore beyond our adequate conception.

The tea cup episode could not be dropped with any more impunity than the tea cup itself could have been. Another reaction set in: "Why were such powers so trivially used?" Here again rose doubt of Madame Blavatsky and hesitancy about the T. S. in which the seeker had by then begun to crave membership.

What is about to be confessed may prove shocking to some new students (though it is hoped not), just as the acceptance of miracles as a "scientific" possibility may have proved to others. In fact until recently it would have been shocking to the student reporting. It is because it proved helpful to him, and was one of the steps by which with the help of the T. S. he was led back into the church, that the risk of shocking fellow beginners is ventured upon.

The character and nature of Madame Blavatsky's occult phenomena were not understood at all or accepted as right until a study had been made of the Miracles of the great Master Who founded Christianity. Then the answer as to the "triviality" was found.

To follow the progress of development another apparent digression in the narrative becomes necessary. The very first studies in Theosophy had brought a wanderer back to the old Church in which he had been reared and from which he had turned in a stage of "rationalism," a false growth cut out by the surgery of Sorrow and which had been merely a manifestation of unconscious but ingrowing selfishness. Until the *Bible* and the *Book of Common Prayer* were recognized as Theosophical they had, as a matter of fact, made no real appeal. They had been read in duty, used by rote and even enjoyed emotionally, but they had never been the guides to the Path that they became when considered in the light of Theosophy. Since then, there has been found in them, in almost every phrase, pure Theosophical doctrine paralleling—no, duplicating—the Theosophical doctrine in the Eastern Scriptures, such as the *Bhagavad Gita,* which were also part of the beginner's early reading.

This is emphasized so strongly because the Christian aspect of Theosophy, which has so rejoiced the student reporting, does not always

appear to those who would otherwise be attracted by the T. S. There are those who use these great Theosophical books almost daily in Church, and yet are obsessed by a conviction (to one churchman-student entirely unexplainable) that Theosophy is unchristian. Whereas, to one who makes even a cursory study of the various Scriptures and studies the doctrine at all, it would seem unavoidable to conclude that Christ Himself taught and teaches pure Theosophy of the highest, finest kind. To the new member it sometimes seems as if the apparent failures of Christianity have only been at such times as its so-called teachers and would-be followers have departed from Theosophy and thereby from the fundamentals and indespensables in the teachings of the Master.

All this is not as far afield from the discussion of Madame Blavatsky's occult powers as it might appear. Somewhat hesitatingly, because perhaps daringly, it has been said that an understanding of why they were deliberately "trivial" came through the light of the records in the *New Testament*. Have not all His followers at some time in their spiritual development gone through the phase of wishing that Christ had exercised His power and by marvelous deeds accomplished His Kingdom on earth? Yet, as we grow to see, thereby He would have defeated His purpose of helping men—would have thrown away the sacrifice of His own Incarnation.

There would be no greater physical unkindness to a strong man than to carry him through life on a feather bed. What he gained would be but momentary—a transitory feeling of ease hardly ephemeral—but what he would lose would be everything, beginning with his health. So would it be on the higher plane if a soul were given too great ease—there would be no growth, according to all the teachings and, it would seem, as each of us knows by intuition.

From help received in his own struggle, the student reporting ventures the suggestion that we would have suffered had the Lord and Master made our paths too easy. Has He not given us the Vision, shown us the Goal, and is He not ever ready with His Help as we struggle toward it, thereby permitting our (real) selves, our Souls, to develop? It is true that He wrought what we call miracles, from the limitations of our Western studies into Nature and her Laws, but were they not all suggestive and never conclusively demonstrative? Even when He raised from the dead was He not merely suggestive, for, having shown what He could do, He did not exercise His powers to give the supreme and conclusive demonstration by declaring Himself a temporal King of the Jews and saving His own body from an ignominious and painful death?

Perhaps now it will be clearer why it began to seem to the beginner that may be the revival of Theosophy by Madame Blavatsky, in com-

parative ease as following the possibly greatest revival by our Lord and His disciples, notably St. Paul, did not call for potent miracles but merely for a reminder, so to speak, that such powers are "latent in man." Even a "trivial" suggestion after all these centuries of effort, it would seem, should be enough to re-awaken that faith which alone can start one on The Path.

Help in his understanding was given the student when he came to study even lightly the history of that time. Spiritism, with its misuse and misunderstanding of the Kama Rupa and its temporary survival after death, threatened to sweep the world and to bring thousands to destruction through their false efforts on the psychic plane. Madame Blavatsky was apparently used to spread the teaching that so-called "spiritual phenomena" were not the work of surviving consciousness bringing tidings from the Individuality released from its physical shell through death, but were explainable on simpler and less inspiring grounds as special and useless development of universal psychical powers, misapplied and utterly misunderstood. As taught in *Light on the Path* and all through Theosophical literature, mediums may be able for a brief time to use a real but limited power for fruitless purposes, but they soon exhaust their ability and fall back on fraud to maintain their position. No "revelations" of any value, except as confirmation of the Eastern teachings as to the real nature of man, have ever been made in this way. Even Professor William James said that he had never heard anything in all his experiments that could not have been in the mind of some person present. In other words while rejecting "spiritism" he suggested telepathy as a possible alternative.

By this time in his progress in the study of Madame Blavatsky's manifestations, some understanding was coming to the student. They no longer troubled him. Yet they had not been simply dismissed from mind. They had been accepted and, lo and behold, they at once ceased to be of any importance! Apparently the new student was representing in this attitude a phase of this day when such phenomena are uncalled for and are not given. Possibly an age when the telephone is used by everyone and wireless messages no longer bring a thrill is very different from the days at Simla at the end of the '70s, when a prophecy of Marconi's accomplishments would have been taken as proof of insanity.

If a beginner, in humble desire to pass on the help he has received from without and within, may venture a recommendation to those first turning towards Theosophy it would be this: "You do not have to understand or accept Madame Blavatsky's occult phenomena unless or until you want to do so. If you have faith you can let your Self unfold in the sunshine of Theosophy without giving thought to any seeming

shadows. If you can pass on to the fundamentals you can pass by the non-essentials."

To illustrate: James Freeman Clarke called himself an Unitarian yet he was an avowed follower of Christ, and it seems to the student reporting that Dr. Clarke's heterodoxy may have been a needed protest against the rigid swaddling of Christ's doctrines by Orthodoxy with its attempted elimination of Theosophy. Dr. Clarke "explained" the miracles to his own complete satisfaction and so they did not interfere with his acceptance of the Master. This explanation was that they were miracles of winning men's hearts. For instance, Dr. Clarke stated that it was not a physical miracle, a "supernatural act," when the multitude was fed with loaves and fishes but that the Master's teachings of love and the effect of His own personality so worked upon the hearts of the multitude that when in His trust and humility He began to give from His scanty store others were stimulated to share their supplies with those less fortunately provided and so by a miracle of charity the multitude was fed.

The writer happens to believe otherwise. Perhaps if the dear old Doctor had lived to this day when even exact science is less material he might have recognized that there are natural powers, hidden forces that may be applied in accordance with natural Law, unbreakable and immutable, by those who know how, and that among these Christ may be numbered. Yet these orderly acts would seem to those who cannot follow the formulas as miracles. Dr. Clarke's was a day of scientific materialism when "matter" was accepted as absolute and final and when organized Religion sought to throw out the spirit, to exalt the intellect—ultimately with sorry results. When Science in a few years has traveled so fast on the road toward the Theosophical teachings of thousands of years ago, is it straining belief to imagine that good old pastor as enrolled with us were he alive to-day, and accepting Christ's miracles as correctly recorded facts and yet not supernatural?

This problem of "miracles" and "manifestations" which confronted the new student had hardly been passed before he found the personality which could not be ignored becoming responsible for another question of moment: Was not Madame Blavatsky, the human reviver of Theosophical teaching and founder of the T. S., opposed to Christianity?

This is a question which will be hurled at the new member from many outsiders to whom Madame Blavatsky is really unknown yet who too cannot ignore her personality. Perhaps it is a question to be answered by older students, but to the new student the answer is the seeming paradox: "Yes—and no." The use of a paradox in this particular matter perhaps may be justified by quoting from the Second Comment in *Light on the Path,* " 'Light on the Path' has been called a book of paradoxes, and very justly; what else could it be, when it deals with the actual personal experience of the disciple."

Against the dogmatism, bitterness and uncharitableness that marked what called itself Christianity in that day, Madame Blavatsky hurled herself in a fierce and fearless fight. There are those of us who still remember *Ivanhoe*. When at the end Cedric released Gurth, and the freed serf rushed away to have his iron collar of bondage cut off, the process must have hurt him, but he did not mind, because he knew he was being made free. If he had had to be freed by force, and without his understanding that he was being freed, he would, undoubtedly, have fought against the blacksmith and have screamed with pain. The more one studies the career of Madame Blavatsky and the record of the T. S. the more apparent it grows how powerful an instrumentality the combination has been in making more Christlike the Christian Church. Madame Blavatsky might be regarded as the blacksmith cutting off, under orders, the collar of serfdom even at the expense of momentarily hurting the freedman!

That Madame Blavatsky never opposed the Master Christ or His own teachings, and, therefore, never was opposed to true Christianity seems to be the inexorable conclusion to be drawn from even a cursory study of her work; from even a beginner's analysis of the doctrine she transmitted.

That this is not to be dismissed as a mere opinion of a new student is indicated by the fact that while the T. S. has all creeds represented in its membership, in accordance with its Constitution and its practice of tolerance, yet among its most loyal and active members (including some of Madame Blavatsky's own pupils) are to be numbered some of the gentlest, finest, truest followers—veritable disciples in truth—of our Lord Jesus Christ that are to be found throughout Christendom.

It was from an active worker in the T. S. organization, a man of brains, ability and high standing in the outside world, that the writer first heard enunciated as fact, a firm belief, a quiet conviction that the Master Jesus Christ in person works to-day as an active Individuality to save His flock—a doctrine set forth in the *New Testament* and accepted by the Fathers and even yet recited in words from every Christian pulpit, but truly accepted and believed in by pathetically few outside the T. S.

As the applying student found, and as set forth in its Constitution, no one has to accept anything arbitrary in joining the T. S. It is the experience of one new member that the modern Theosophical teachings and organization started through Madame Blavatsky bring one back to the Master, Jesus Christ our Lord, and to His Church, in the simple and sincere spirit of a little child who foolishly runs away in a make believe feeling of being grown-up and who returns, tired and sorry but sure of a welcome, to a loved and loving parent and a happy home. Through which feeling comes some understanding of the teaching in the opening verses of Matthew xviii. SERVETUS.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

"Once bodies were offered to flames for man's uplifting.
Now souls are bared that men may see the way to grow."

THIS splendid phrase, quoted by the Editor's last victim, seems to me a fitting introduction to all the articles which may ever be written in this series; for it is at once an explanation and an apology.

My way into the T. S. was, as I look back, almost accidental. I was not looking for Theosophy; or, consciously, for anything. I had simply come to the end of my rope, and had exhausted all the means at my command for solving the problem which was most important to me. I wished to work a miracle—or to have a miracle worked for my benefit —and when, at last, I realized that everything that I called truth had failed, I suddenly found myself entering the real world of miracles.

It is difficult to see how one's early struggles after light can have any interest, even to a public so broad minded as the readers of the QUARTERLY presumably are; and I would gladly spare them (and myself) any account of my steps on this momentous journey, only I see by examining the confessions of my predecessors in this series, that they all began at the beginning; and the beginning of one's way into the T. S. is surely one's first groping after truth.

At thirteen, or thereabouts, I spent some agonizing time in believing I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost—and wondering what it was. At eighteen I looked about me and said, "But if the Sermon on the Mount will not work, then Christianity cannot be true; and none of these people believe it; no one does." I knew only one, a transcendent person, with the heart of a child; who handled life like a god. He was the great exception; but I never came anywhere near his secret. At nineteen, a clever young friend of mine, full of self-confidence and Herbert Spencer, made me see that to pray for rain was nonsense, and the Litany practically an insult to our understanding. So my poor little structure went, and I felt rather superior without it. Browning and Emerson remained and Marcus Aurelius, and the wonderful world to experiment with.

Some years afterwards I found myself in a desperately difficult situation. In order to preserve my own life it was ordered that the life of my unborn child must be sacrificed. And everything in me rose up and said "No." At this critical point someone suggested trying "Mental Science." I did not know what it was but I said, "I will try a dancing

dervish rather than lose this baby, but don't ask me to believe anything." "Oh! you don't have to," I was quickly reassured; and the Mental Science healer was fetched. She was a quiet little woman who did not seem at all disturbed by my scepticism, but assured me that I might expect to be better, and that there was nothing to fear; and then she sat with her hand over her eyes and "treated."

In a few days I began to feel differently, not better physically, but a new energy seemed to pour into me. Two weeks from the time of her first visit I dragged myself from the bed I had lain on for weeks and walked almost a mile to her house, and after that there was no more trouble. During the months which followed I made my first dim approaches to an unseen world—for this experience had to be accounted for. The whole vast region of the influence of the mind on the body had been opened up. Granting that my only trouble had been nerves or some form of fear, why had our physical inequalities such fearful power over us?

The little healer gave me some books to read, with the wise advice to take what seemed true and to leave the rest; but on no account to become irritated or to argue. These little books, execrably written, and full of strange ignorances, still ushered me into a new world. They did not ask one to take anything on faith, but they flattered all one's unsuspected powers, and life became an even more interesting field for experiment. One might have called this a search for truth in spite of its exponents, for there was always something difficult to account for in the mental-scientists themselves. If their truths made for power they certainly did not make for charm, and there seemed to be something rather dangerous about their admonition, to "deny the mind"; it gave them an unfair advantage! They differed from Herbert Spencer in regarding Christianity not as an outworn creed, but as a religion which had never been understood and which contained a secret of power which could be much improved upon. Their favorite text was "Greater things shall ye do than this." They also had a disconcerting way of asserting things to be true which they wished to have become true, but which had little basis in existing fact. This they called making an affirmation.

About this time I went to a lecture by a shining light of the period. She was one of Mrs. Eddy's first pupils, but had seceded from Christian Science and was founding what she called a "Theological Seminary for the training of pupils in Divine Science." The lecture seemed to me a hopeless jargon of unrelated ideas, but the speaker closed with some very striking words. She said that the clue to what she had been saying would come later, but that in the meantime she wished to offer her hearers two words, which, if faithfully used, in times of disturbance, pain or difficulty, would produce a result which they would find of great practical value in reaching stillness of mind. These words were "Jesus Christ." At this time I had neither interest nor faith in this name, nor

in the Master who bore it, but I had a blind instinct that it was "in the Silence" that the truth was to be found.

For years I vaguely sought it and used this name, mechanically, experimentally, in the effort to find stillness, and never in vain. I taught this practice to my children and even when they were very young, when wakeful, when suffering, when afraid, they learned to use it and to find help.

Then followed years of experiment. I found myself one of a group of eager seekers. We started in search of the sources of these new and vital truths. We read Plato, Hegel, Froëbel: everywhere we found the same witness to the divine within, the glad tidings that man is one with God. The mental-scientists insisted that oneness must be expressed as power; we had only to will to achieve in order to achieve. And we did achieve; health, and energy and prosperity; difficulties went down before us. We attempted the impossible and very often seemed to attain it. Then we took to healing. We never spoke of these things, but we were often surprised at what happened. Still there were always some places where "the law" did not seem to work. One of us had a delicate child, who would not respond to treatment; and one could not seem to "materialize prosperity"; and one, the frailest body but the most indomitable spirit, after heroic and splendid achievements in "denying the body", had a stroke of paralysis. For a year we kept her alive—all our faith seemed at stake. Here was the supreme test. She was brave, and noble beyond words; she would not let herself die and at any moment it seemed as if she must "take up her bed and walk." For if faith was the essential then we must not fail in faith. The horror of that year is with me yet, and the strange madness of it; and in the end it was reserved to me to sit alone by her side, hour after hour, and watch her die. Once more all that I held true went down before a fact. But through it all, during those long hours, the pitifulness of the truth we had struggled for came slowly clear. Life? Surely this broken body was not life! And healing? Why not beyond as well as here? Death? Surely it must be *nothing;* release, deliverance, opportunity. The failure, the tragedy, was here; the hope beyond. That poet-soul, that aspiring saint, could not die because she blindly chose to break the vessel that contained her life—and when at last she ceased to breathe I knew there was no death.

. . . . . .

But I needed a great deal of hammering to get my eyes open, and life continued to give it to me. The events did not square with my theory, but it was easy to see where one omitted the faithful carrying out of one's own part in the performance, and I knew I had not yet found "the Silence" (whatever that was!). Finally I had a sickening shock. The life of a person very dear to me was hideously threatened. It seemed to me quite clear that I was largely responsible for this disaster,

and that—well, it simply *could not* be allowed to be. She must be got well at once. I turned instinctively to the little healer who had helped me years before.

She, somehow, did not convince me as a personality. I felt vaguely that she had not grown in the interval, but she was very reassuring; she had often had such cases, she was quite sure she could cure this one. There were doctors employed, too, and all the scientific methods; but in my heart of hearts my reliance was on the little healer. There seemed to be very little human hope about the situation.

"If Christ ever healed then He can heal *now*. If it ever was true then it must be true now. If it is not true now, it never could have been true." These words went round and round in my mind, but the absurdity of the fact that if these things were true *I* could only reach them by means of a paid healer, never even crossed it. I was paying for the faith of someone else; expecting a miracle to be worked by paying a third person to make it happen! It was years since I had prayed, prayers to a would-be mental scientist seemed rather faithless performances, but I tried once more to find the silence.

All my well-trained faculties had gone back on me. There was, of course, no such thing as fear, but I lived in abject terror. In order to get hold of myself I joined the Vedanta Society and tried deep-breathing. The Swami was unconvincing and I felt no temptation to explore his sources. I paid my fee, promised not to divulge what I learned and went off with the first lesson. It worked perfectly. So much breathing, so much concentration on the end of your nose or your toes, I forget which, and a rock-like steadiness was the result. This was most encouraging, and I stuck to it far more faithfully than I ever had to my effort to find "the Silence." But in order to get the later lessons you had to spend an hour a day on the first for a given number of days, and I always found it difficult to achieve the second half hour; so I was a long time about my lessons. In the meantime two of the best procurable mental-scientists were working over the "case" in which I felt so deep an interest, and were affirming that the patient was full of life, energy, joy, wholeness, that her healing was complete *now;* but nothing happened.

A year and eight months passed away, and with them seemed to pass unconsciously to myself, much that I called life. I swamped myself in work—anything to get away from the unsolved problem. At last, out of space, I saw the foolishness of wasting time on breathing in rhythm, with your mind on your toes, when there was only so much precious time to spare and perhaps what I needed was, after all, to learn to pray. But the work I had undertaken piled up and there never seemed to be any time for that.

Things went from bad to worse. I began to loathe the work I was doing and to doubt its value, and the more I doubted and loathed, the

more it became my duty to do it. At last there came a morning when everything in me rose up in revolt and I said desperately, "Shall I never have time to learn to pray?"

. . . . . .

Perhaps the only excuse for a narrative so personal as the foregoing is that it serves as an introduction and explanation of the letters quoted below. They were the answer to my question, though at first I was only conscious of a deep desire to know why my child was not being healed.

LETTER NO. 1

June 18, 19—.

DEAR ——:

My last talk with you inspired me to the point of a good intention—I would write a pamphlet for the special benefit of such people as the friends you had mentioned, who feel that the further help they seek can be obtained only outside the Church. And, instead of answering your direct question about books, I wrote several pages on that other subject. In the midst of them I was called off and have been immersed in accounts and financial statements ever since. Fate. But the good intention remains. I cannot, however, any longer delay a reply to what you asked me.

"Books about Christianity"; but what kind of books? Some people need books like Eucken's—to break, or in any case, to soften their "moulds of mind," their preconceptions and prejudices. But your mind is open and free. I suspect that if you were to go to a physician of souls, he would prescribe not intellectual pabulum, but original research. He would say, I imagine, "Go after the thing yourself; Clement said that knowledge is attainable, and it is. Take it."

Then comes the question: How? And there we can follow in the footsteps of those who have done it—with this great advantage over most of them, that our minds, I hope, are less rigid than theirs. They had fixed conceptions of what they would find when they got there—fixed interpretations of creeds, pet reforms, historical incrustations.

I would be inclined to start like this: Christ is more than Divine; he is Human ("very Man" as the Articles say). He is more than Great High Priest; he is friend, companion, *teacher*. Why not be taught?

For years after his "death," he appeared to and taught his disciples. All through the centuries he has taught those who have gone to him for teaching—from Catholic Saints to Protestant Reformers. They asked and they received.

We impose limitations. He does not. All he asks of us is the perfectly simple faith with which a child will approach some stranger on the street and ask to be helped over a difficult crossing. We say—

"That was all very well for saints but I'm no saint; it would be impossible for me." We forget that such a statement really defines *his* ability rather than our own. He never asked us to believe that we could do things with him; but he did ask us to believe that he could do things with and for us—if we would let him. It perhaps resolves itself, for a good many people, into the practise of keeping still. We pray, but often with the feeling that we are doing so at very long range; and then, having prayed, having fired a lot of petitions or remarks at this remote objective—we feel that we have finished. It is an extraordinarily one-sided conversation. We don't *listen*. We have to learn to keep our minds sufficiently still to listen. They are so full of hopes and fears, of worries and regrets, and of our ten thousand "interests" that, instead of being quiet, they are more like the surface of a seething caldron.

You remember the old simile: the surface of a lake which reflects the image of the sun—serene and sheltered from the wind; and the same lake, storm-driven, reflecting nothing. But in our case, the wind blows from inside, not from without.

It is, as you may well remark, far easier to preach than to practise. But I console myself with the hope that others may be more successful than myself! And if, by experience, we know a certain course to be right, we must at least pursue it. It is not a "new" doctrine. It is the oldest of any that I know. I venture to send you a little book with extracts from a very wide range of authors showing how universal the experience has been, and how unanimous the recommendation is. Then, I wonder if you know a series published by Longmans, Green, and edited by H. L. Sidney Lear: if not, and you will begin with "The Hidden Life of the Soul," I think you will get others. "Self-Renunciation" is excellent, too.

One thing I wanted to bring out in that pamphlet is our loss of faith in the faculty of knowing; that it is a spiritual faculty, absolutely distinct from any mental process, and that the mind—unless we allow it to usurp functions which do not belong to it by right—is the interpreter: that which compares, arranges, analyses, formulates. It stands to reason, that concentration of *that* faculty—which is the aim of people who practise breathing and other similar exercises—can result, at best, in no more than mental "one-pointedness." Its effects cannot be spiritual. We have to transcend the mind; and although this at first sounds formidable and perhaps dangerous, it ceases to be so when we realize that spiritual feeling precedes spiritual knowing, and that love, in its real sense—love of the Divine and of divine things and persons—is the pathway which Christ himself told us to follow if we would have knowledge. It follows that if, during meditation, we try to "concentrate our minds", the probability is that we shall concentrate *on* our minds. If, on the other hand, we try simply to feel the reality of spiritual things, and let the mind go, the result will be that the mind will keep still because we no longer pay

attention to it (this is difficult to describe). If, further, we try to realize that the limitations of time and space, as we know them, do not exist in the real world, and that Christ instead of being remote, is "nearer than hands and feet"—our attitude making that possible—we ought, before long, to feel and recognize his presence. Later (if we can accept the testimony of his disciples, living as well as dead, and I am confident that we can), we ought to transcend that experience and to have conscious communion with him—"communion" I believe, meaning "a shared consciousness." He *knows;* so we, too, shall get knowledge.

You remember what Lacordaire says about the inner life: that it consists of each man's conversation with himself. If we were to take life and all the events of life as a continual demonstration; and if we were to look to Christ as an ever-present Instructor, I think that our inner life would be lived with *him* and that our conversation would in fact be in heaven. That requires attention, recollection, and detachment —and those three words were suggested once to me as the essentials of spiritual life; but I think they come with desire, and with practice. Of one thing we may be sure, that if we desire to reach him, he has an infinitely greater desire to reach us. If you put yourself in his place: how he must long for those who will learn to co-operate consciously with him in his work for the world!

And I will not apologize for such boldness. Surely we must be *bold,* if we would become more than religious parasites.

. . . . . .

Very faithfully yours.

What I have said of Christ reads to me as cold. "Instructor," yes: but also a friend, so great that he has a passion of concern for every living soul.

LETTER NO. 2

July 4, 19—.

DEAR ——:

It has been my great good fortune, during the past twenty years, at one time and another to know people whose first-hand experience of the spiritual life has been so much wider and deeper than my own, that in comparison with them I am a mere infant. My own knowledge has been just enough to enable me to recognize their superiority—as one who has practised even a little on a musical instrument is able to recognize an expert. Such good fortune would have been more fruitful if I had asked questions more boldly, and, above all, if I had with greater perseverance attempted what they had achieved.

Your own experience in certain directions has been unusually wide; and I do not know that mine can be of service to you. But there is only one way to find out, and that is by questions as searching as you know how to make them. That your questions the other day were searching

is cause for congratulation and not for regret. I wish there were more people in the world in a position to probe as deeply. You will realize that the utmost any of us can do "to help", is to express in words that which the other already knows intuitively—that which lies within, but just beyond the field of the personal consciousness. A touch from without may precipitate such knowledge, as an electric current passing through a solution will precipitate crystals. The effect is that of sudden illumination. But there can be no such sense of illumination unless the "solution"—the knowledge in a latent condition—has already filtered down sufficiently to be within reach.

We have a Teacher—and teachers. Some people are taught in a sense more personal and direct than is true of most—those who have demanded it, who are ready for it—those who have "made their connection." It is the soul that is taught, either during deep sleep or in hours of meditation when the brain-consciousness no longer rises like dense black smoke to cloud our spiritual sky. Then, from the soul, that God-given knowledge must pass into the soul's shadow, which we call ourselves. And there are times when someone from outside, or a book, will serve as means. You, of course, know all of that; and that, if we look for such teaching, it is easier to *remember*. For you certainly receive it. Nor have I ever heard of limits being set to the kind of knowledge thus given—anything we need to know for the better performance of our duty, we may ask for and shall surely receive.

The recognition of such knowledge means, of course, that for the moment we share the consciousnss of the soul. It is, as you say, like looking from the top of the mountain—at least over *that* problem. Later that wider consciousness will always be ours. We shall live in it. But, naturally, for the present such moments are rare: they come and go. The memory of them, however, does not wholly leave us. We pass from one to another, as on stepping-stones across a river.

The question of health is certainly important, particularly so in view of the Christian Science and similar movements, some of the followers of which seem to regard health as the end and aim of religion. I have never had an opportunity to discuss the matter frankly with such people, and probably you have not either. Yet it ought to be faced and thoroughly threshed out, at least with the more reasonable and moderate among them, with whom, as I think you told me, you were, and perhaps still are, in close touch.

. . . . . .

It was Zeno, I think, who pointed out ages ago that neither life nor death, neither health nor sickness, neither wealth nor poverty, are things either good or evil in themselves. Obviously how we use them is the test. The only things good in themselves are justice, aspiration, courage, compassion, and the other qualities of soul.

I know of a case now in which an old man is being brought to life

(in the real sense) by the prolonged agony of dying—a man of title in England, dominant and egotistical, whose career has been a continued success, but whose heart, at bottom pure gold, had been debased by the iron of his own will. He is being refined, as gold is refined in fire: and fire hurts.

Some people would say, "He has never been a bad man, what has he done to deserve such suffering?"—the mediæval idea of punishment. Others would say, "He need not suffer; by hypnotism or by Christian Science or by mind-cure, he should at all events be made not to suffer"—the new idea that suffering is necessarily evil. I do not think that either view is Christian.

Inevitably, however, when anyone we love is suffering, it is immensely difficult to see in right perspective. We forget the possible needs of the soul, and think first of the body. Christ would see beneath the surface—would think first of the soul, and, when healing the body, would, with spiritual power, give material expression to some spiritual achievement: to a state of repentance or of faith already achieved. In other words, he, as the Master Refiner, would not withdraw the metal from the furnace until it had been brought to the state of purity—in which he could see his own image reflected in it (a refiner's actual test). We, in our impatience, would withdraw the metal at once, just because we are being hurt, either in our own persons or in the persons of those we love.

I grant fully that we have often the power to do this, either by will, or by diverting the direction of our own spiritual forces. By either of these means we can, in many cases, stop the physical expression of the disturbance and thus do away with the physical pain. But, in the first place, by so doing we run the risk which is always run when we dam a river, and, to use another simile, which we run when we suppress free speech. The Gnostics described the personality as "the purgation" of the Soul. I think the body is, in a sense, "the purgation" of the personality.

We do not want to drive the disturbance back from the body into the secret places of the mind and heart. All of us admit the influence of fresh air, of exercise, of proper diet, and of rest. The purpose of these is elimination quite as much as nutrition. Why not use physical means, as we do in other connections, to produce physical results, and so help the disturbance to escape by and through the body? And "in everything with prayer."

In the second place—why not with prayer? (and this, I imagine, would be your method). The Apostles did not use their own will, or their own spiritual power, except in prayer. That is to say, they relied not only upon the power, but upon the wisdom of Christ. They submitted their personal will to his divine will; their personal judgment to his divine judgment. Their prayers, and doubtless also the faith of the

person to be healed, supplied at least part of the spiritual energy used by Christ in the cure. But, in the last analysis, it was *his* cure and not their own.

This can be and is done to-day as often as it was done by the Apostles and by the Saints. The trouble is that most people, when someone they love is ill, become so anxious and so fearful that they do not expect their prayers to be answered: and there must be faith. Their prayers *will* be answered if they *ought* to be answered; and if they ought not to be answered, what would they have? There are things so much worse than death. Further, the modern church-goer forgets, I fancy, the injunction to pray without ceasing, and the parable which taught the power of importunity. If he does not get lightning results he leaves the Church and takes up Christian Science.

. . . . . .

But I am, as before, writing to you for the imaginary benefit of those whose needs you express vicariously. You can reach them and I cannot. The point of it all is that they do not know enough to recognize their own limitations. Like the Socialists, their table of values is all wrong; and like certain physicians who prescribe drugs to remove what are merely symptoms, they are so carried away by immediate and indisputable results, that they are blind to effects and reactions beneath the surface which only those who see with the eye of the Spirit can trace and understand. Needless to say, I am not one of those, but I know I am not: and I know *who is*. So I rely upon him and upon those who work with him. There is not only unbroken tradition, but plenty of modern experience in favour of that, the original procedure.

. . . . . .

Very faithfully yours,

——— ———

July 25, 19—

DEAR ——:

I took your letter with me to the country, expecting to answer it from there. But I was disappointed. You will, I hope, pardon the delay. I have waited only in the hope of being able to answer it as it deserves.

. . . . . .

Now for the main subject: I wish that I could help you with your little girl. Perhaps I can. But if so, it will be chiefly by suggesting how you yourself can help her. The New Thought people echo very old and vital knowledge when they speak of the close connection between mother and child.

It is said that for many years after physical separation has taken place at birth, there is the closest possible psychic and nervous (or etheric) rapport; so that the condition of the mother's mind reacts

directly upon the mind and so upon the health of her child. Naturally the extent of this interaction must vary in different cases, and must decrease with advancing years. But the point is that it exists, and that it is substantial and real.

This gives power as well as responsibility. Power to bless, power to heal. A mother, far better than any one, should be able to draw directly upon the Divine for the well-being of her child. To draw directly upon the Divine, however, needs not faith only, but, particularly in the case of a mother, great self-control; because to draw upon, means to work with, and to work with we must bring our own will into unison with the Divine will. Instead of being opposed, thus ⫞⫟ or so ⫞⫞ the flow of force must be concurrent ⫞⫞ : our own will and the Divine Will must be similar in direction. Evidently, we cannot hope, and should not wish to dominate that will; evidently we cannot resist it—at least not permanently. Consequently, we should submit to it. We can do this with the resignation of the nun, or with the glad acceptance of the warrior. And I want to suggest that true submission lies in our ability to make the Divine Will our own wish; that it is essentially a warrior virtue—not negative, but positive and glad.

This means, in other words, that in all circumstances, in all prayer and effort, we must try to adopt the attitude, "Thy will be done."

First the test comes for ourselves—the test of our willingness and ability to accept all things whatsoever that the will of God may bring us; the test of our faith, not merely in the power, but in the wisdom and love of the Divine. Do we know best, or does Wisdom itself? We shall reach a point at which we shall fear nothing any more from any quarter whatsoever, because nothing can happen to us which is not an expression of God's wisdom and of His love for us. But there is a second and a much harder test—can we say, "Thy will be done" for those we love? Do we *really* believe in His wisdom? Can we force ourselves to trust, to accept what will seem like "the worst", until we gain the conviction that, if "the worst" should happen, it must necessarily conceal the best, and that that which had seemed a hideous disaster is in truth the careful plan of the infinitely wise and compassionate Director of our own life and of theirs? To be frank, although it has been done, I do not see how "acceptance" can be carried so far until we have at least an intellectual understanding of the meaning and purpose of evolution. But it will in any case be clear that that sort of acceptance gives power: among other kinds, the instant readiness to use and to get the best out of every situation as it develops—the spiritual best for those we love; and it gives stillness, which is peace, because there is no longer opposition to the Divine Will, and no longer that interior friction which such opposition generates. There can be no stillness—and no "hearing" until, to some extent at least, that attitude of acceptance has been attained.

"The true source of all that frets and irritates and wears away our

lives, is not in external things, but in the resistance of our wills to the will of God expressed in external things." Soon or late we all must learn that lesson, not once but many times, until we know it. Some of us learn it only after terrible suffering, but that is because we have disregarded or rejected our earlier and easier opportunities.

Finally we shall discover that our submission is not to a will foreign to our own, but that the Higher Will is in truth the will of our own innermost being. As Henry Clark puts it, "We shall grow into an identification of ourselves with God"; or, to quote a very different writer:

"Not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted . . . not till the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its Higher Self can the bloom open . . . Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee. Take his orders for battle and obey them. Obey him, not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself."

Now it seems to me that some of those who claim to use spiritual powers for healing (not all of them, of course) fail to recognize that wisdom and love quite as much as power, must be qualities of the Divine —and for our present purpose it does not matter whether by that term, we mean God, or the Higher Self, or Christ, or the Universal Spirit, or the Over-Soul. Superficially these people *seem* to wish to dictate to wisdom: though I suspect the true explanation is the fixity of their belief that the Divine *always* wills health.

The fact that ill-health exists—and that death is unavoidable—should prove that it too is so willed, not as a punishment or as an evil, but as a good: as a means by which health of soul can be attained.

My own belief is (and this is my answer to a question you raise) that such people have half-discovered, but have failed to understand, a great spiritual fact, which St. Paul expounds in the 15th Chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians—generally taken as referring to death only, though they might have wondered, if it is to be read in no other way, why he should have interjected, "I die daily."

The Spiritual body of which he speaks—the body of the resurrection —the body of our immortality—is just as real as the physical, though subject no longer to the limitations of time and space as we now know them (the theory of the Fourth Dimension throws some light on this). Jesus, after the Crucifixion, talked with his disciples and ate with them. In *that* body, which is the immediate vehicle of the Soul, and, in a certain sense, the direct expression of the soul,—there is perfect equilibrium, or "health."

So we may account for the half-intuition—for the psychic perversion of the truth—that health is "the right" of the Soul's body. In his physical body Jesus suffered and died. In his spiritual body "death was swallowed up in victory." And we should remember that it is

the mortal which must put on immortality: that the spiritual body evolves, is built up—or should be—as the result of our aspiration and effort while functioning in and through these infinitely more dense and at the same time more shadowy bodies which we so foolishly think of as "ourselves."

The Master is concerned with the growth of the spiritual body. The life of the physical is merely a means to that end. If you care to compare the following passages you will find that, on this point, the New Testament is explicit: II Cor., Chapter iv, verse 16 to Chapter v, verse 5; Col. iii, v. 10; Eph. iv, vv 23-24; I Peter iii, 4; I Cor. xv, vv. 35 to 56.

Further, growth on that plane must be subject to the same general laws as those which govern similar processes known to us physically. The law of cause and effect, of action and reaction—that whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap, and that whatsoever a man reaps that he must also have sown—which is known in the East as the law of Karma, and which Roman Catholics seem to mean in a narrower sense when they speak of a man's "merit"—must govern the whole process of spiritual development. As a law, it is merely the expression of the absolute justice, impartiality, wisdom and compassion of the Divine Will—not the monopoly of Buddhism or of any other Oriental philosophy.

We are born in a certain family, with tendencies healthy or the reverse, and at a certain time, because it is in just those surroundings that we can best learn the next lesson we need to know. To attribute all character to physical heredity is to deny free will. Physical heredity simply provides the soil in which the heredity of the individuality can develop. Where, when or how the individuality has acquired its tendencies, relatively speaking, is unimportant. The essential fact is that a child has certain characteristics when born, and that the environment into which it is born is the expression of its "Karma" (for want of a better term)—of its spiritual needs, providing opportunities for the conquest of its faults and for the development of its virtues—a purely individual matter. No two children are alike and no two environments are alike. Even in the same family a mother is a very different person when her first and when her last child is born. The purpose of it all, in any case, is the perfecting of character and the development of soul.

The world in which we live is like a nursery or a school—a school for souls. To say the same thing, but in terms of force instead of in terms of consciousness, this physical world is the matrix in which the development of the spiritual body takes place. In a very literal sense we must be born again.

Granting that much as true, it follows that to fail in life is to fail to learn the lessons we were intended to learn and that we were given a special opportunity to learn—the lessons of courage, patience, energy, impersonality, understanding, no matter what. There can be no other

failure. Now, once more, let us imagine how Christ must regard the world: What does he hear? Cries of pain, surely—cries of hunger, cries from beds of sickness, cries from wounded hearts. And for all of these he must feel an infinite compassion. Yet how about a deeper cry—"the terrible, agonizing cry of the souls of the world"? If because of the wounded heart, we learn our lesson, the soul must rejoice and Christ must share that joy. But suppose that the wounded heart finds solace in drink or in folly; then surely, the soul herself must grieve beyond grief of ours, and Christ must share in that grief as he could not share in grief which in any case provided the very opportunity for which the soul had worked and waited, for which the soul had longed.

It is easy to imagine a life the chief purpose of which would be the lesson which nothing but constant illness could teach. True, we can never tell when the lesson has been learned—when the need no longer exists: so at all times we must do our utmost to relieve and to cure. But always—and this is my point—with the reservation that His greater compassion and deeper wisdom may prevail over any wish of ours. And that is all I urge. It is impossible to lay down general rules. Each case must be considered on its individual merits. As I said, the relation of mother to child gives special rights and responsibilities. But you will see, even in the case of a mother, how unwise it would be to trust her child to certain practitioners, say of Christian Science. They assert that a certain thing *is* the Divine Will—without in the least knowing. But if it is not the Divine Will, the power upon which they draw is not and cannot be spiritual. It is what St. Paul calls "psychic and devilish"—a form of energy totally different from that which reaches us from the spiritual world, but sufficiently powerful, not only to produce physical results, but temporarily to delay the expression of forces trying to work their way through from the world of soul. This banking up of the outlet may give rise to an inner condition corresponding to what we should describe as inflammation, which reacts back upon the development of the spiritual body—at best delaying the putting on by "the corruptible" of incorruption.

There is but one path of safety, which is also the path of peace. And even for a mother there may be peace—peace which will create around her child an atmosphere in and through which the spiritual powers can work without hindrance for her child's best good. I do not know what others ought to do, or what attitude they should adopt; but I think I know the attitude I would try to adopt if child of mine were ill: Realizing in the first place that Christ *did* heal; convinced that he can as easily heal to-day, I would, at the turn of every hour during the day, and oftener if possible, place my child mentally in Christ's presence—myself too—and raising myself to him by the act of accepting his will (by the act of trying to feel my own will in unison with his)—I would with all my heart ask him to heal my child. I would try to make my "call" as serene and as clear, as direct and as simple as I could. I would

ask him to send in any case his blessing upon my child, and to cure, if, in his greater wisdom, cure would be best.

I would *know* that he could hear me; I would *know* that he could heal. I would try never to swerve from my conviction that the child would be cured the very moment that would be wise and best, considering the deeper, and, to me, unknown needs of her soul. I would fight anxiety and fear and worry, as I would fight the worst of sins. I would try to surround her with an atmosphere of steady cheerful confidence. Meanwhile I would do whatever I could to provide means of physical cure, even to the use of certain drugs if I could be convinced of their serviceability—on the same principle that if I were in prison and wished to escape, I would not simply sit down and pray and expect a miracle to happen. We must not forget that it requires energy to perform "miracles" and that the energy we liberate, physical as well as spiritual, can be used by those who know, to bring about the result we desire—and deserve.

Fundamentally, however, it would come to this—The case is in *your* hands. I will do all I know. I will provide such physical remedies as I can—but her life is YOURS. With every thought and fibre in my nature I trust you to do what is best. Heal her, I beg of you, if that be possible and wise. She is more yours than mine. I love her, but you must love her better than I know how. Use me, if that be possible. Guide me even in the matter of physical means. I submit every detail to your guidance. Tell me if I am now doing what is right.—And then I would try to listen: quite still, without strain, a still mind and heart at rest. There would be stillness if I really trusted; if I had the confidence and love of a child, and if I could realize that he hears and understands far more completely than you, who read this letter, hear and understand me. He would answer at once; but perhaps, because of my anxiety it would take time for the answer "to get through." Nevertheless it *would* get through. He can always reach us when it is necessary to do so. But to tear through—through the fog of our minds—involves reaction. St. Paul was blind for three days after that meeting on the Damascus road, simply because, at that time, violent means had to be used to reach him. When we look for an answer, with faith and patience, it filters through, often imperceptibly.

There are things in your letter still left unanswered—though nothing which I would not gladly answer if time permitted. I have delayed reply so long, however, that I want at least to get this off while I can. That it will be of any immediate comfort I cannot hope. But you are not looking for comfort. You are looking for the truth, and for the true way in which to help your child. I can do no more than tell you the best that I know.

. . . . . .

Very faithfully yours,

———— ————

It is hardly necessary to comment on these letters. The first had the effect of a sudden illumination: scales seemed to fall from my eyes—the horizon to widen and lift in every direction. I followed it up by a number of direct questions, to which the second was an answer. Then I hinted at my insoluble problem; the answer to which is suggested in the third. It was through the regions of experiment and effort into which these letters led me that I found my way to The Theosophical Society.

Why did I join it? Well—as much of me as has been able to join it (to quote another of my predecessors), came in consequence of the receiving of these three letters; of the observation of a group of lives; and of the reading of two books. In one I recognized the beautiful "warrior" quotation; the other contained the following definition:

"Theosophy . . . is wisdom in God, a wisdom which has God not only as its subject, but as its principle; it has for its basis the Divine revelation in Scripture and in nature, and it springs from an inward illumination by the Spirit of God, which makes the contents of the revelation apprehensible. Its form is not that of reflective thought, although this is not excluded, but, first and foremost, that of intuition, immediate perception, central apprehension of God and existence.

. . . "Out of the idea of God it seeks to apprehend the world. in all circles of the universe to see things as they are in God; it seeks to be a *philosophia sacra* in contradiction to a *philosophia profana.* It embraces nature and history; seeks to present a philosophy of nature in the light of the Divine idea, just as it also strives to give a philosophy of history, a representation of the principles of the Kingdom of God, as these are developed from the first super-historical commencement of the kingdom of God, from the creation and fall of the angels, and of man, throughout the various periods of time—a persistent struggle between light and darkness—until the final judgment and consummation of all things. In its interpretation of Christianity, it does not limit itself to its practical ethico-religious import for man, but seeks to apprehend its cosmical meaning, its significence for the universe, and to prove that the principles of Christianity are identical with those by which the world itself subsists, and on which the foundation of the world is laid—that Christianity is the focus for all world-forces and world-powers.

"In so far as Theosophy is assigned a place in the history of philosophy, and it is not excluded as an unscientific or super-scientific vagary, it belongs to that department of philosophy which Schelling has styled *positive* philosophy, in contrast to a negative, purely rational, non-postulating philosophy, which seeks its principle out of reason itself. The difference between Theosophy and purely rational Philosophy may be thus indicated in terms borrowed from Leibnitz: 'Theosophy pursues the path of light' ('In Thy light we shall see light'); while purely rational Philosophy pursues the path of gloom, because it simply roams among dim shadows with its own faintly glimmering light.' "

J. B. P.

THE SPIRITUAL ORIGIN OF LIFE

SOME time before the British Association assembled at Dundee, rumors were heard of remarkable revelations concerning the origin of life. At last, we were told, the great secret would be disclosed, bringing the fulfilment of Tyndall's declaration at an earlier meeting of the same body: "We find in Matter the promise and potency of every form of Life."

As the fulfilment of these large promises came a paper by Professor E. A. Schäfer, President of the Association, which was widely distributed and discussed. In itself, this paper did not amount to much; it hardly carried the subject beyond the point at which Tyndall had found it, or beyond the fact that, up to the present, all attempts to form living matter artificially had completely failed. But Professor Schäfer made up in surmise and theory what he lacked in fact, and it seemed, for the moment, that the cause of materialism had received a great accession of strength. Only for the moment, however; for the paper, not very significant in itself, began to draw forth comments, notably from Sir Oliver Lodge and Alfred Russel Wallace, which are in the highest degree significant, and, we venture to add, thoroughly Theosophical, in the true sense of that much misused word.

Perhaps most significant is the comment of Alfred Russel Wallace, the cabled report of which we give, as found in The New York *Times*.

"Prof. Schäfer's arguments" said Mr. Wallace, "are the same as those of Haeckel and all the great agnostics, but he does not really get over the difficulties one iota more than they did. So there is nothing in what he says that one can call new.

"He begins by stating, as if it were his point of view, that the problems of life are essentially problems of matter, and that we cannot conceive of life in a scientific sense as existing apart from matter. He puts down what he could conceive and could not conceive as a dictum, without any attempt to prove it.

"Take, for instance, Crookes and myself. We have studied the subject of psychological phenomena for forty years, and we know pretty well that there are phenomena of which these men are absolutely ignorant, which prove the existence of life without matter, as it were, certainly without ordinary matter. So that vitiates all his reasoning right away.

"A little further on he tried to show the similarity of the process of reproduction in living and non-living matter, and the only thing

he brings forward is crystals. He says that crystals grow and multiply and reproduce their life, and therefore he appears to be utterly ignorant that a crystal is simply added to on the outside, whereas life is a thing of wonderful and complex structure and is added to on the inside. That, I consider, is a wonderful case of bad reasoning, of begging the question.

"Another and the most important fallacy in the whole thing is the assumption, without showing that there is any difficulty about it, that if you prove the production of dead matter, you can prove the production of living matter. The nucleus of a cell he says, is not very complex chemically, and the substance of it can be reproduced, but it is not a living nucleus.

"All the chemist can do is to experiment with dead matter; he cannot subject living matter, continuing to live, to his chemical processes. Therefore all he gets is the production of dead matter, and he says that is the same as living matter. He repeats again and again that when you have got the same matter and the same chemical substance, all you have got to do is to produce it chemically, and then it will have all the properties of living matter."

"That," declared Wallace definitely, "is the very one thing they haven't gone the slightest towards."

Wallace then quoted Prof. Schäfer:

"The composition of these elements in a vital compound represents the chemical basis of life, and when the chemists succeed in building up this compound it will without doubt be found to exhibit phenomena which we are in the habit of associating with the term life."

"Now, that," Wallace commented, "is absolutely unfounded. There is not the slightest proof of it, and to most people it is absolutely incredible. Yet he says it without doubt."

With regard to Prof. Schäfer's ruling out the question of a soul in his considerations, Mr. Wallace remarked that even Haeckel did admit a soul, saying every cell has a soul. He went on:

"All the rest of his address, though it is very careful, is based on the assumption that all the changes which take place in growth and reproduction are chemical. He gives no proof whatever, and the difficulties and differences are so radical and so enormous that the whole thing really is absolutely worthless. But he is not quite so dogmatic as Haeckel, who denied the possibility of any life but what has developed from matter.

"In my last book, 'The World of Life,'" said the veteran author, "I have endeavored to deal with that fundamental point, which all these psychological agnostics, as they call themselves, utterly ignore and pass by, and that is, whence comes the directing power?

"The two things, growth and reproduction, are without equal in any chemical process, certainly, and none of these men makes the slightest attempt to get over the difficulty.

"In my book I deal in detail with these things, and in a chapter on the mystery of a cell I show that some of the greatest modern writers admit that there is a mystery in it; that its changes are most marvelous. All this they ignore—all this directive power, which enables the cell to go through a marvelous series of changes and development, not one of which can be explained by any mechanical or chemical process.

"Prof. Schäfer's assertions are so bold that they catch the public ear and the public fancy, but they are entirely valueless.

"If," Wallace said in reply to further questions, "chemists do produce life, it is not they who produce it. The chemist never goes into the ultimate cause, he does not deal with directing power.

"What does force come from! Dead matter itself, when you get down to its fundamentals, is becoming almost as complex as living matter. In the mere atom there have been shown to exist countless minute things, every part imbued with force. Whence comes the force?

"I maintain that you cannot explain the smallest portion of dead matter without a series of forces, which imply mind, which imply direction.

"One of my great points, going back and back and back through life, is the matter of the universe in its bulk. You have got to consider the origin of what is called the dead universe, the cosmos, which is as full of complex directions and laws, not quite so complex but nearly so as those of living matter.

"Whence do these forces come? Prof. Schäfer never attempts to give any idea of how feeling, sense, the power of perception, can possibly arise out of dead matter. He says distinctly that it arises from the nervous system. He would produce a nervous system, but is it likely?

"The nervous system, which is a machine for the manifestation of consciousness, should produce consciousness. Huxley said, 'Life is the cause and not the consequence of organization.' It is not organization that produces life, as is assumed all through Prof. Schäfer's lectures.

"If you assume that the directing power is essentially a spiritual power, then you can understand all this, but without it you cannot understand it."

In conclusion Mr. Wallace said:

"Death is absolutely necessary to the process of development through evolution. It is calculated that if a certain small organism

were allowed to multiply steadily with nothing to prevent it from increasing, in a little over one hundred years it would have produced enough living matter to fill up the whole known universe. That, you see, proves the necessity of death.

"Here again we see the existence of an antecedent mind, which so constituted matter that it could not be immortal. If living matter had been immortal from the beginning, development would have stopped.

"All the forces of life are directed in a way that is utterly distinct from chemistry. Anything that chemistry can do is beside the question."

"In chemistry," said Mr. Wallace, "only certain things will produce certain results. In life the most diverse things will produce the same results. One man may feed entirely on animal food, another entirely on vegetable. The machinery is the same, yet this same machinery, so differently fed, produces identical results in muscle, nerve, skin, hair, everything."

"Its organism is like an enormous engine, but it is an engine which can reproduce itself. There is the directing power."

If we may venture to comment on a pronouncement of such excellence, it is only to suggest that, in discussing Life, sufficient weight is not given to the two most important qualities of Life, namely Consciousness and Will, while too exclusive stress is laid on the lesser function, that of building and repairing organic tissue. As to the latter, one may generalize and say that chemical action tends always toward stable compounds, while vital action is continually making unstable compounds, which, when life is withdrawn and the material is left to purely chemical forces, at once tend to disintegrate and decay. But after all the great fact of life is not tissue but consciousness and will; it is only the materialism of our minds which accentuates the former and ignores the latter. We doubt if even Professor Schäfer would venture to predict that chemistry, at any future time, will be able to "create" will and consciousness, the true manifestations of Life. C. J.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE Agnostic, like any other man, will find the Truth, if he be true to the truth that he sees; by which I mean, if he will live out his philosophy in detail from day to day and from hour to hour. Those who merely call themselves Agnostics, and who act as if they believe in what they profess to doubt—those who, in other words, keep their philosophy on the psychic plane as a plaything for their intellectual entertainment, never find the Truth, but remain, like the psychic, the victims of their own delusions."

The Student had been telling us about a lecture he had given and about the questions it had evoked. The Objector was in a mood particularly sardonic. "What you say," he remarked, "is quite incomprehensible; but perhaps that does not matter, for it sounds well: I admit that: it really sounds uncommonly wise. And I respect even an appearance of wisdom now that most people advertise themselves as fools. An Agnostic, you say, whose ideas are all wrong, will find the Truth if he will follow his wrong ideas. It sounds comforting as well as wise. How does he do it?"

"If he doubts the reality of a stone wall, and walks into it, the bumping of his nose should convince him—which, by the way, is not necessarily personal." (There was, however, a cheerful gleam in the Student's eyes as he turned to the Objector). "My point is that the psychic, who is deluded, if he will act conscientiously in accordance with his vision, will discover that his vision was misleading. He will suffer, but he will learn. On the other hand, the psychic who never leaves the psychic plane—that is to say, who never makes his dreams objective by conforming his conduct to them, and who, therefore, is untrue to the light which he sees,—such a man will remain in ignorance, self-deceived and the deceiver of others. He will learn, perhaps, only when he becomes the cause of such suffering to one whom he loves (if love still be left in him), that he will be compelled to face the error of his ways and change them.

"It is exactly the same with the sceptic. He indulges himself with vain imaginings, and, not content with this, casts gloom over the hearts of others by his attitude and atmosphere of doubt. What is it that he doubts? Challenge him. Does he doubt the reality of the soul, or his free will, or the free will of others? Yet he acts in all things, not as if he were merely a body, but as if he expected others to attribute to him standards of honour, purely abstract, which often contradict expediency, and which it is impossible for him to defend on material grounds. And if he doubts the freedom of the will and moral responsibility, why is it

that, when another man pushes him on the street, he feels indignant? If he were true to his philosophy he would think of that man as the unhappy victim of fate: he would be incapable of annoyance, and, in time, incapable of exertion."

"I agree with you," said the Philosopher. "The universe is justly governed. It is a law of life that the utmost range of truth is open to the man who obeys the truth as he sees it from day to day, while the man who fails to conform his conduct to his vision, becomes, both morally and intellectually, more and more blind. That is why there is a better chance for a man of sinful life, but who believes, let us say, in kindness, and who practises it, than for a man whose outer life may be negatively impeccable, but who never practises the kindness in which, theoretically, he believes."

"The truth is," commented the Sage, "that we misuse the word 'belief.' Someone calls himself a Christian, or a Theosophist, or a Buddhist. By this he means that he believes in Christianity or in Buddhism. Actually he believes in nothing of the sort unless his entire life be based and built up on his belief. If a man says that he loves a woman, and then behaves as if he loved another woman, or several, the object of his declared affection may be excused for feeling piqued. Obviously, he does not love her at all. In the same way, if a man says that he believes in Christianity and, on week-days, steals, the truth is that he does not believe in Christianity but in stealing. So also if a man calls himself a Theosophist, but shows a prejudice against Christianity or some other mode of religious belief, it is evident that he does not believe in Theosophy which is all-inclusive, and which means Divine Wisdom in whatever form it may be found: he believes in something which can only be dignified as 'anti' whatever his aversion may be . . . The Student is right: the man who is true to the highest that he sees cannot fail to find the Supreme. A wrong belief will not work. Consequently, those who try to live what they believe, if their belief be erroneous, will be disillusioned. So, seeking more light, they find it."

. . . . . .

"Practical advice!" The Sage laughed. It was at another informal meeting of the same group. "People do not want practical advice. They want to listen to eloquence. They enjoy the stimulation of their emotions. And they like, at times, to feel pious. Practical advice means a change in motive and in manner of life: and they do not want to change. The purpose of religion, with most people, is to provide a way to the kingdom of heaven which will not involve an uncomfortable disturbance of themselves. They want to get there as they are. . . . Your friend, you say, is an exception? Well, there are exceptions. Let us thank the gods for that. And he wants 'to live the life'? Dear man, if he means that, one and all of us will serve him as you know, to the

end of time, with all that we have or are. If only they knew the joy of finding someone ready with heart and mind and will to follow the light he sees! Where should he begin? Why, with the first fault of which he is conscious. Conquer that; put a virtue, the opposite of his fault, in its place: and proceed with the next. It is divinely simple. . . . 'Should you lend him books on Theosophy?' No: not until he learns by fidelity to the practice I have recommended that the only purpose of books on Theosophy is to help us to build *character.*"

"That," interrupted the Objector, "is rank heresy. He should rid his mind of superstition, and he should learn to love the truth for its own sake. There is such a thing as an intellectual interest, absolutely justifiable, in the nature of man and the universe."

"No man ceases to be superstitious by changing his ideas about things: he merely changes his superstition. Nor is the truth ever known until it is lived. An infinity of harm has been done in the name of Theosophy by pandering to intellectual curiosity. What do you suppose the Masters are working for? Can you imagine anything more horrible than the children of so-called Theosophists, with minds made wise by talk of Karma and rounds and races, but whose lives were immoral! Is that what the Masters want? No, a thousand times No! The Masters work that heaven and earth may meet; and this can happen only as one man after another makes his own heart heavenly, his own life noble, his own mind clean and true, direct and simple. There is no greater wickedness than to prostitute the everlasting Light to common and mean uses. It is meant to be lived by,—not to be talked about and paraded as an intellectual panacea. There are those who prostitute the name, though not the Light (for that they cannot do) for personal aggrandizement. There are those who prostitute the name—again, not the Light—by attaching it to psychic hallucinations and to astral debauch. But the state of these, bad as it is, can hardly be worse than the state of those who act as if the acceptance of theosophical beliefs with the confusion they call their minds, or the acceptance of those beliefs by others, could make the slightest difference, this way or that, to the sum total of spiritual Becoming. The kingdom of heaven will come when the character of men and of women is heavenly: not before. And the poorest and most ignorant persons, Catholic or Buddhist, Mohammedan or Hindu, may be nearer to the heart of Masters—may be more kind, more tolerant, more gentle, more loyal to the truth as he sees it, more courageous morally, more sincere in aspiration, more fervent in effort—may be, in brief, a far better Theosophist, than some of us whose minds are saturated with what we call Understanding, but whose lives prove all too clearly that we have misunderstood and travestied outrageously the wisdom we call divine.

"So I repeat again: do not let your friend read more than the first

four axioms of *Light on the Path* for at least a month. Let him work at those—putting fire and steel into the work—searching his nature for the evil and ugly in it that he may put beauty and virtue in their place. . . . And there are well-known books: *The Imitation of Christ,* for instance. A chapter each day, with ten minutes for each paragraph, will be more than enough. We kill ourselves with reading. . . . Words and ever more words, and nothing done."

"But should I not tell him to meditate or to pray?"

"Pray; meditate—by all means, so long as he does it with the right motive: not that he may extract favours out of deity, or that he may have 'experiences,' but that he may get strength for his one work, light on his one work, love for his one work, which is the work of Masters and of God—the work of perfecting himself as a man, of perfecting his *character.*"

"Very few people know how to begin," ventured the questioner. "I doubt whether I do."

"It has been explained hundreds of times," replied the Sage. "Read *Fragments.* Ask yourself what kind of a person you would like to be; what are the qualities that you dislike, and that your best friends dislike in you. Do this methodically. Write down the result. Add to the list from day to day. In this way you will sharpen the outline of your ideal; will make it more definite. But do not make the mistake of trying to become everything at once. That would be as foolish as trying to learn a dozen languages at the same time. Take one day of the week for the special practice of one virtue, and for the conquest or, rather, for the transformation of one particular fault. Take the next day for another virtue and for another weakness, and so on. Two or three times a day examine yourself to see what you have been doing and thinking and feeling: for your ideal must cover all the planes of your nature, and you will discover before long that virtues and faults express themselves on all planes. Keep a record of each day's work. Devise some system of marking yourself for success and failure."

"Would not such a practice make one introspective and morbid?"

"Yes,—if it were perverted for the feeding of vanity. If a man were to examine himself, not in the light of his own ideal, or as in the presence of his Master, but with desire for the approbation of the multitude and with fear of their disapproval, it certainly would make him morbid. Further, if instead of externalizing his ideal, he merely broods over it psychically; if, instead of forcing himself into action of a kind representing the opposite of his fault, he merely regrets and laments his weakness, of course he will become introspective and negative and abortive."

"What do you mean by 'the opposite of his fault'?"

"Suppose a man to be too fond of eating, or of comfort in some

other form. This means that in his soul he desires to give pleasure and comfort to others, and that this desire, spiritual in its origin, becomes distorted as it passes through the personal consciousness and expresses itself outwardly as self-indulgence. It is a common-place that *bon-vivants* often are good-natured and 'easy going.' But suppose that a man, with that fault, realizing that it makes him selfish and forgetful of the interests or happiness of others, and wishful, therefore, to overcome it,—suppose that, whenever he finds himself meditating on prospective meals, or lost in the enjoyment of immediate and objective turkey, he checks himself, and then tries to discover some way in which he can please or add to the enjoyment of others: do you not see that positive and prompt action, if it go no further than pouring a glass of water for his neighbour, will make morbid introspection impossible, and will also create in him a tendency the opposite of his bad habit?"

The Philosopher had been listening intently to this long dissertation by the Sage. "Group consciousness," he said. "I have been thinking along that line for a week or more. Of what possible use is a belief in Reincarnation and in Karma, unless it helps us to realize that character lasts; that it is of permanent value; that no effort to perfect ourselves is thrown away; that we reap in practical efficiency both in this life and forever, every act of self-renunciation and of positive well-doing? The motive, of course, must not be the glorification of the individual himself, but the desire to serve, with his Master, and for love of him, those whom his Master serves. He must begin by realizing that there is but the one way to do this—the way you have outlined, the way of the small, old path, stretching far away, along which all disciples have travelled, and which in the present as in the past begins where each man stands, with the performance of his most obvious duty, though with a new incentive and an eternal purpose."

The Objector came to life again. "One of you," he said, "spoke of reading, a few minutes ago, as if it would be a crime even to read the QUARTERLY."

"And it would be a crime to read the QUARTERLY unless it were read rightly," the Sage retorted. "The QUARTERLY may be used in such a way as to enervate both the mind and the will. Everything we read should lead to action, or the effect is injurious. I do not mean that we can hope always for an immediate opportunity to express in action the resolution of the will to which the reading should have led us: but there must be real resolution and, through the imagination, actual visualization of that upon which the will has determined. Over and over again I have noticed people, supposed to be resting, but absorbed in some novel, and, after an hour of reading, more wearied than when they began: negative instead of positive, weakened in will instead of strengthened. Even novels can be read with profit, but only by those who remain

positive while reading them. Suppose a young girl immensely attracted by the heroine of a story, and filled with desire, as she reads, to become as refined or as charming or as self-sacrificing as the imaginary character she admires. If she is positive in her attitude the result will be beneficial, but if her attitude should be negative, she is as likely as not to become discontented, discouraged and depressed. Works of pure imagination, such as fairy tales and certain kinds of poems, are less likely to be harmful than novels, because the only excuse for them is their beauty, and the consequence is that our appreciation of them tends to revive within us our desire for the beautiful."

"Yes,—please allow for that," interjected the Student. "The Good, the True, and the Beautiful—each an aspect or quality of deity. So long as reading results in an effective desire for the best of any of these, it helps. And it should be sufficiently varied to cover all three aspects, seeing that, without the due balance of all of them, deformity of character must result."

"There I follow you without question. But I confess to being tempted at times to wish that all novels could be suppressed. No matter how valuable some of them may be, as studies of human nature, and as revelations of human beauty, the fact remains that taste is easily vitiated. We lose our taste for simple and nourishing food, such as requires mastication, if we live for long on 'made' dishes. In the same way, serious reading, meditative reading, becomes difficult and unpalatable after a course of effortless absorption such as magazines and the novels of the day make possible. . . . I know that my tendency is to lay stress on the value of the Good, perhaps at the expense of the True and the Beautiful, and that everything I say ought to be qualified with that in view. But this is because people will not realize that the man, even the philosopher, who sees truth with his head without expressing it in conduct, sees only the husk of truth: in other words, he does not see it at all. The beautiful, also, cannot exist apart from truth and virtue, while these, in their turn, create beauty. The plainest features become lovely when love shines through them; and when the whole tenor of a life is noble, nobility of feature, which surely is a form of beauty, necessarily must result. It is easier, perhaps, to cloak evil with the pretext of Beauty, and to cloak sloath with pretended love of Truth, than to misuse the Good. In any case, so far as your friend is concerned, it will be safest for him at first to concentrate his attention on the moral qualities: the æsthetic will come later. And he should read whatever he does read, with a single eye to that development."

"I do not think that any of you have made enough of prayer and of meditation." It was the Disciple who spoke. "You wish and rightly wish," he continued, "to insist upon that side of the subject which so frequently is treated as of lesser consequence; but I doubt if any man

could understand what you have been saying about the growth of character, simple as the truth of it is, unless he had previously simplified his own heart by means of prayer. He might imagine that he understood: but the proof of his understanding could be supplied only by the way in which it affected his will. And if what you have been saying were used by the Recorder in the *Screen,* the question is: how many people would resolve to live differently in the future! Very few, I fear, unless prayer had already brought them to that point."

"We have discussed prayer before," said the Objector, "and I for one can see nothing in it except the folly of attributing to Deity an ignorance of your needs which can be far from flattering, and which, if the universe be governed by law, must be quite futile. You ask and ask for things that you want, or that you believe your friends need. . . ."

But the Disciple knew what was coming. "Pardon me," he said, "but we are speaking of totally different things. There is, as you say, the prayer of petition. But there are many other forms of prayer—that of contemplation, for instance, which, in theosophical terminology, would be described as a very advanced form of meditation. If our previous discussions have not made this clear to you, they have to others: that I know. Yet I would suppose that anyone as familiar as you are with theosophical literature ought to be able to interpret any mode of prayer in terms of force, and to see in it, therefore, something more than futility. Any prayer, if it be backed by desire, is creative. Desire, be it remembered, 'first arose in It, which was the primal germ of Mind.' It was through desire, and articulated desire, that the universe came into being."

"I am going to use what you say," the Recorder interjected. "So beware!"

"In that case," replied the Disciple, with a smile, "you had better begin by explaining that every human being, whether he knows it or not, has a Master. One of the purposes of vocal prayer is to bring us into touch with that Master, who is infinitely higher in the scale of life than is usually supposed, but with whom, because of his greatness, it is possible to establish the most personal and intimate relations. The Buddhist prays to Buddha—not only the northern Buddhist, but those of the southern school also, as Fielding Hall has told us. The Christian prays to Christ. These Masters are the representatives of God to those who pray, both theologically and in fact; for they are the mirrors, as it were, in whose face God is seen. Prayer is a means of changing the conversation we are constantly carrying on with ourselves into conversation with that great being who is our Master: and this is something we must do if we would make real progress in holiness."

"Prayer," said the Objector, "is distinctly a Christian method; and I dislike Christianity, root and branch."

"Be bold, be bold," the Disciple retorted. "Try to become a Theosophist. If you succeed, you will cease to dislike Christianity. You will welcome the truth wherever it is found. And you happen to be wrong when you say that prayer is a Christian method. It is common to all religions. You might as well say that self-conquest and the cultivation of the virtues are Christian processes. Why not leave that sort of thing to the missionaries of the early Victorian period? I have just been reading the *Kashf Al-Mahjub,* the oldest Persian treatise on Sufiism. Like all similar treatises, it is based, nominally, on the Koran, which is quoted (xxix, 69)—'Those who strive to the utmost for Our sake, We will guide them into Our ways.' Then the comment: 'The mujahid (the disciple) is he who struggles with all his might against himself for God's sake.' . . . But you would suggest, perhaps, with the aforesaid missionaries, that such doctrines were stolen from Christianity! No? Then you should read the section entitled 'The Uncovering of the Fifth Veil: Concerning Prayer.' When Ali was about to pray, we are told, his hair stood on end and he trembled, saying, 'The hour has come to fulfill a trust which the heavens and the earth were unable to bear.' To him, 'every time of prayer was an ascension and a new nearness to God.' . . . How can you be so bigoted, so narrow? Surely it is a disgrace that any member of the Theosophical Society should be unable to read with profit an exposition of prayer by some Roman Catholic priest, or by some Hindu yogi, or Sufi mujahid, or Buddhist ascetic! We should look for the Truth: not for its garb. The universality of religious experience seems to me to flow so inevitably from any comprehension of Madame Blavatsky's teaching, that even if the Society were the pitiably sectarian sheep-pen which you would make it, the most intolerant of its members would be compelled to admit that the spiritual experience of Madame Blavatsky herself must have been identical in essence and often similar in form to that of St. Theresa or St. John of the Cross. . . . Yes, you make me indignant. Theosophy stands for something so magnificent; so splendid in depth and breadth and height; for Light so terribly needed by the modern world, that to see you, my friend, deprive yourself and therefore others of all but its rind, compels an apology for anything less than anger!"

They are very good friends, and the Objector realized that he had carried provocation far enough. "Tell me," he said; "how can I do penance? What books on prayer do you want me to read?"

"Unless you change your attitude, the fewer you read the better. You have got to acquire humility at least to the point of being able to recognize your own limitations—among others, that as yet you do not understand the first thing about the inner life. Take, for instance, a

book such as *Progress in Prayer,* translated from the French of Caussade, and published by Herder of St. Louis. It costs about a dollar. You will find references occasionally to the Mother of God and to Mass, as you will find references in the books of any religion, which you will not even dream of accepting. Surely you would not throw away the wheat because of the chaff! Open that book at random, and if you do not find something of practical value, something that you can use, I promise to withdraw my recommendation."

The Objector took the book and opened it. "Sixth Dialogue," he said, "page 99, 'Rules or Suggestions for Beginners.'"

"That ought to suit you admirably," and the Disciple beamed. "Please read on."

"It is in the form of question and answer:

"'Q. What suggestions have you for beginners?

"'A. Mainly three: these, however, include many others.

"'Q. What is the first?

"'A. To cultivate recollection at every favorable opportunity. Often during spiritual reading, or at Mass, or at Holy Communion' (the Objector squirmed), 'or after some little act of self-denial, or in consequence of a good thought or of a brief raising of the heart to God, or on similar occasions, we feel ourselves interiorly attracted by what may be called a sudden taste of God.'

"I hate that," he said. "I hate the language of it. It is not only sanctimonious; it is beastly sanctimonious."

"You remind me of a friend of mine, to whom, many years ago, I loaned *The Voice of the Silence.* He opened it at random and read some reference to 'the great Bird Aum.' His comment was far from complimentary."

The Objector remembered: he was the friend: he had been the commentator. "You have me there! Read on, Macduff," cried his tormentor. So the reading was continued:

"'This is really the work of the Holy Spirit' ("Call that Buddhi," interrupted the Disciple. "It will make it easier for you." "That is foolish," the Objector rejoined, rather nettled: "I do know enough of their language for that!"). 'These moments are favorable opportunities not so much for speaking to God as for silently listening to Him' ("Call that the Master," again interrupted the Disciple. "You have been trying for years to find the Absolute. It is high time you attempted something feasible. Change that word throughout to 'the Master'—because you have a Master, and this is to help you to find him. But now, read on: I will not interrupt you again").

Once more the Objector read:

"'At such times, we should not exercise our usual activity, but rather simply submit to "the Master's" activity within us, and remain

as long as possible in that loving and quiet attitude which can best be designated as an attentive repose, and which virtually contains many good acts, all of them well known to the Master.

"'Q. What are the benefits of this holy practice?' ("I wish he would not be so pious!")

"'A. First, touched by our continual attention, confidence and abandonment, the Master effects within us whatever He knows to be best for us; and on our part there is no interference. In the second place, we gradually form and strengthen the blessed habit of dwelling before the Master in repose and attentive silence,—a habit far more difficult to acquire than is ordinarily supposed.

"'Q. How can that be? At first sight, nothing seems easier than this silent repose. Indeed, to many it seems so easy that they regard it as idleness.

"'A. The difficulty of acquiring this habit comes first from our secret presumption and vain confidence. We behave as if persuaded that no progress could be made unless our own share in the activity were greater than the Master's. St. Catherine of Genoa relates what our Lord said to her about this. She had asked,—Lord, how is it that in the time of the apostles and prophets, Thou didst work so many great things, and gavest Thyself so abundantly to men; whereas now it is far otherwise?—Our Lord replied:—My daughter, men used to be more simple and more diffident. Formerly they depended entirely on Me; but now they are so self-confident, so concerned about what they themselves are doing and saying, that they do not even give me time to work My will in their souls. They are incessantly repeating things to Me; as if I were likely to forget anything. They wish to say everything themselves and to do everything in their own way—.

"'Secondly, the difficulty comes from the fact that it is extremely repugnant to our self-love and our natural mental activity for us thus to renounce our own thoughts, reflections, and customary operations, and to confine ourselves to simple direct acts, hardly perceived and hardly perceptible. This is a real dying to oneself, and is perhaps the most mortifying kind of interior self-denial.

"'Q. Do the saints seem ever to have experienced this difficulty?

"'A. They do, indeed. The venerable Mother de Chantal actually felt that she required an express command in order to overcome her shrinking.

"'—My Father, she wrote to her holy director, order me to keep myself in this repose and silence. I trust that my mind will respect your commands—.

"'The pious Bishop replied:—Your prayer of simple rest (recollection) in God is extremely holy and salutary. Do not doubt this. . . . You have only to keep on practising it quietly—.

"'St. Francis de Sales often vainly urged himself to preserve this interior silence so that he might follow his attraction. Once when his mind had grown weary with prolonged discoursing, he cried out: O my God, do Thou Thyself arrest this wanderer!

"'Q. . . . But supposing that a favorable opportunity for recollection happens to occur during vocal prayer or during spiritual reading, ought these exercises to be interrupted?

"'A. If the prayers are not of obligation, we should quietly interrupt them and devote ourselves to recollection as long as the attraction lasts. According to Bossuet, to act thus is simply to abandon the less perfect for the more perfect. . . .

"'And now as to spiritual reading. Although to attend to things written about the Master is profitable, yet it is still better to listen to the Master Himself; when He deigns to speak in the inner recesses of our hearts. Moreover, excepting the case of necessary instruction, we need not attend to what we are reading any further than is needful in order that our hearts should taste it. It is an established maxim with the mystics that we enter more deeply into the truths of faith by peacefully tasting them than by any amount of reasoning. Hence some simple persons, with neither learning nor wisdom, have grander ideas of God and of the mysteries of faith than souls who confine themselves to intellectual investigation. The Psalmist said, Taste ye and see; and not,—as might have been expected,—See ye and taste. A great modern mystic well versed in this matter, has said: The words we read are only the rind of the fruit, but the taste of God we obtain is, as it were, the juice which nourishes and strengthens the soul.

"'Q. But I do not quite understand how a simple taste of God can produce these great results in the soul.

"'A. It is a general principle that the heart is bound to an object more easily, quickly and permanently by taste and feeling than by knowledge. Note the wonderful attachment that a single taste of the miserable pleasures and vain amusements of the world can produce in persons otherwise very sensible. This may help you to understand how the soul is attached to the Master more strongly in the measure that its taste of Him is more perceptible and more sweet. When the soul tastes the Master, its increase of knowledge keeps pace with its feelings.'"

"Very mystical, that," said the Sage. "The uninitiated who read it will do as Fitzgerald did with the Rubaiyat: they will take it literally as physical taste just as he took wine and the cup, to represent alcoholic intoxication. . . . I am not sure, even, of the Objector." But the Objector snorted defiance and continued his reading.

"'Q. And now, what is your second suggestion?

"'A. It concerns the way in which we should receive the gift of a perceptible taste of the Master. Beginners who are, as St. Paul says,

usually nourished with the milk of spiritual consolation, are apt to abuse these consolations, and, on that account, soon to be deprived of them.

"'Q. How may this danger be avoided?

"'A. Our consolations should be received in a spirit of noble disinterestedness; we must never become attached to them.

"'Q. Why must we be disinterested?

"'A. In order that we may never be led to pray for selfish purposes; and that our motive in praying may always be to obey the Master's will and to learn how to conform to it better and better. Disinterestedness is necessary again, that we may never let ourselves be carried away by sweetness and led to act as a famishing person does when presented with food and drink. Sensible tastes are only means of union with God. We must not dally in them; we must always keep moving on toward the Master who has bestowed them only to help lead us to Himself. These tastes should be valued only in so far as they remedy our infirmities and inspire us with disgust for creatures.' ("'Indifference to worldly objects,' is the translation there," remarked the Disciple. "Every word of this could be paralleled from the spiritual treatises of other religions, but it would be difficult to find such simplicity and directness of statement, once you become familiar with the terminology.") "'In a word, since the Master requires moderation in all things, our behaviour during these blessed moments should be something like the behaviour of temperate people at table; they eat to sustain life and health and strength, and not merely to please the palate.

"'Q. Why must we avoid attachment to these sensible consolations?

"'A. Because the Master and not His gifts should be the object of all our attachments.' ("He means there the will of the Master, which of course is the will of the Higher Self," the Disciple explained.) "'To be attached to His gifts would beget in us over-eagerness when they are bestowed, and anxiety when they are withdrawn.

"'Q. But is not such anxiety holy? and what harm then can result from it?

"'A. This, that whenever the Master withdraws sensible consolation, we shall always experience uneasiness, trouble and grief.

"'Q. Then He does sometimes withdraw it? Why so?

"'A. The Master deals with beginners as a mother with her son. When training him, she often opposes him just for the sake of teaching him that he must have no other will than hers. She makes him come and go at her bidding, do a thing and then undo it, lay down what he has just taken up and take up again what he has just laid down. In the same way, the Master, in order to render souls pliant and flexible in His hands, opposes their holiest desires. A hundred times a day He lets them experience the sweet approach of a consolation which comes, is felt,

and vanishes, all in a single instant. Occasionally, our prayer consists in nothing but a constant recurrence of these phenomena; though in the end it will result most profitably if, by holy detachment from all things of sense, we practise heroic renunciation of our own will and blindly submit to the Master's will.' "

The Disciple broke in: "I promised not to interrupt your reading," he said; "but that last paragraph serves incidentally to show how necessary it is to test all things and to hold fast only to that which is true. No mother would behave in the idiotic way that he suggests: nor would a Master. A child might imagine that his mother had no better motive than unreasonably to test his patience and obedience. But, granting the mother to be something better than a fool, she has other and more valid reason for her request, or for her withdrawal of that which her child enjoys.

"Faber, in his *Growth in Holiness,* explains it better. But the experience is common to all mystics. As beginners—that is to say, once they really begin—they receive from that Master much encouragement, of which they are conscious as 'spiritual sweetness' and 'sensible devotion.' He uses his own force in order that they may have something tangible to go upon; a basis to work from; experience which will enable them to read devotional treatises, not as descriptions of unexplored country, but as statements of fact already partly verified. And because the force reaches them from without, there is bound to be reaction, which means 'dryness,' and, in comparison with the earlier fervour, a weakening of will and of aspiration. The question then is, whether they have derived sufficient benefit from what has been given them, to enable them to proceed with faith and courage. Will they prove themselves worthy or unworthy? Will they stand the test? Will they justify this use by a Master of his spiritual life, or will they disappoint and rob him? So long as they continue to try, earnestly, and with persistence, they return his gift with interest. If they fail to do that, he, the Master who has risked much to help them, loses the seed he has sown.

"Masters do not seek to make us dependent upon them. They wish us to become self-reliant fellow-workers with them. And although that height will take ages to attain, a beginning must be made. Consequently, even if it were not for the law of reaction, and for the serious harm that would be done to us if we continued to be stimulated as the beginner needs to be, Masters would be compelled before long, for our own sakes, not to leave us to our own devices—for that they never do—but to make their help less noticeable psychically and emotionally. It is the Master's force that sustains us during reaction and dryness. It is His strong hand that keeps us from irremediable stumbling after His first forward impetus has expended itself. But while we may have recognized the impetus as from Him (more often we have taken it as evidence of our own astonishing devotion), the beginner is rarely able to do more than

recognize theoretically the unseen and intangible help which follows. But he has his opportunity to learn his own insignificance, and therefore, of the task which confronts him. . . . It would be folly for him to say, 'There is no reason for this except as a test of my endurance.' He should acknowledge that he does not know his Master's purpose, and should seek to know it in order that he may, by his own attitude, satisfy that purpose as rapidly as possible. And he may at least be certain of one thing: reaction of any kind, dryness in prayer or in other effort, invariably means that some part of the nature has not yet been surrendered to the highest: it is proof positive of some kind of holding back. Consequently, the best thing for him to do is to seek within himself for this hidden barrier; strictly and literally to obey the rule of life he adopted when the tide was with him; cheerfully to accept the fact that he is not yet perfect, and that he is privileged, not at once to join the choirs of angels, but to work, patiently and humbly, to improve himself. . . . But enough of Caussade's misleading comparison. Forgive my interruption and please continue." And the Objector continued.

"'Q. And what harm can result from a holy eagerness to retain the Master's gifts?

"'A. The harm comes from our wishing to appropriate them. We act like badly trained or ill-natured children who, unless force is used, will never yield up what they have once got in their hands. Such eagerness produces that excessive caution which St. Teresa treats as superstition when she speaks of persons so jealous of the sweetness of their recollection that they are afraid to cough, to move or even to breathe. 'They act,' says St. Francis de Sales, 'as if on account of these necessary movements, God was going to deprive them of a favor conferred the moment before.' Hence neither charity, zeal nor prudence will induce these persons to relinquish the sweetness of their recollection,—still less will they cheerfully relinquish it, if some providential misfortune comes to test their docility and to strip them of their own wills in order to clothe them in the will of the Master. Finally this anxiety causes them to indulge in much reflection about themselves and their recollection, and so to bring on many wilful distractions which, diverting the soul's inner gaze from the Master and toward self, deprive it of the recollection it is anxious to preserve. St. Francis de Sales used to say that the surest means of preserving holy recollection is to disregard it, for it will be lost by those who cherish it too fondly. He used also to cite the words spoken by the Spouse in the Canticle to His beloved: 'Turn thy eyes, for they have made Me flee away.'

"'Q. What is the real meaning of these words?

"'A. They teach us to suppress all curiosity about what is happening within us during recollection. We must be content with feeling in a general way that many things are happening which the Master hides

from us. We must trust in Him and abandon ourselves to Him. Afterwards, perhaps, He will let us know more.

"'Q. And now, what is your final suggestion?

"'A. It concerns distractions. There are several kinds of distractions. Some of them do not interfere at all with recollection; others are even favorable to it; and others, again, are of such a nature that they cause suffering by, as it were, dividing the faculties of the soul.

"'Q. Well, we need not concern ourselves very much about the first kind, since they do not interfere with recollection; still you had better tell me what they are.

"'A. They consist of certain vagrant thoughts which pass through the mind, appearing and disappearing with the rapidity of lightning, while the heart remains all the time attached to the object of its affections. You see the heart's sweet repose is decided enough to counterbalance these trifling distractions; just as the pleasure of listening to a fine voice is enough to counterbalance the distraction caused by a slight noise, so that we continue to hear the delightful in spite of the annoying sounds.

"'Q. And now tell me what are the distractions that favor recollection?

"'A. Those which the Master employs in bestowing recollection.

"'Q. How does He do that, and why?

"'A. Suppose that with much effort and the assistance of ordinary grace, we have acquired active recollection which is both difficult to get and hard to keep. Now the mind is still disposed to wander and to stray away in useless thoughts and reflections. The instant we become conscious of any such involuntary wandering, there occurs in the soul a certain interior motion, a kind of mental recoil, which brings us back to ourselves before we know how or why. Then we find ourselves in a new sort of recollection quite different from the former, sweet, continual and easy. After many such experiences, the soul, 'trained in the school of the heart,' realizes that this infused recollection is not the fruit of human labor or industry but is bestowed by the Master on whomsoever He pleases and by whatever means He pleases.

"'Q. And now, what are the distractions which cause so much suffering by dividing the faculties of the soul?

"'A. They consist of the follies and extravagances of the imagination, which occur while the mind and the heart are occupied with the Master, and which seem cruelly to divide the soul within itself. St. Teresa says that she was in this sad state for a long time and that she never found any remedy but patience. She gives her opinion characteristically by quoting the Spanish proverb, 'Provided the mill grinds out the flour, care not for the noise of the mill-clapper.' Thus she compares a disordered imagination to a distressingly loud mill-clapper; the heart attached to the Master and occupied with Him, being the mill which is grinding out the soul's spiritual nourishment.

"'Q. Does not the imagination sometimes lead the mind astray?

"'A. Yes; and, as if for our instruction, St. Teresa herself experienced that also. 'My mind,' she says, 'wandered about like an insane person from room to room. But we must not run after our minds,' she adds, 'for in rushing after the wandering mind and the vagabond imagination to recall them, we run the risk of ruining all, by losing our sweet repose of heart in God.'

"'Q. Then what should we do?

"'A. We should remain in this sweet repose of heart. Our wandering faculties will gradually be led back by the sweet attraction, as a swarm of bees is drawn toward a hive by some pleasant sound or some fragrant odor,—to cite the illustration used by St. Francis de Sales. St. Teresa says that this happy reunion of the powers during a perfectly calm repose in the Master, makes holy souls feel that there is nothing further left for them to desire.

"'Q. But how can the faculties thus first separate, and then unite?

"'A. Well, at any rate, the fact is rendered indisputable by the testimony of St. Teresa and St. Francis de Sales. What these saints have written should go far toward convincing us; for besides the gift of sanctity, they had also, to say the very least, as much intelligence and acuteness as ourselves.

"'By way of illustrating their words we may recall to mind what occurs in a soul under the spell of a strong, ardent passion, but moved, despite itself, by sad thoughts and fancies. In such a case there takes place a painful division between the faculties. But once let the passion-inflamed heart win over to itself the other powers and immediately all sad thoughts and fancies vanish. There is now no longer interior division or contradiction. All is harmony, union, peace, and in consequence, the soul is perfectly tranquil.'"

The Objector stopped. "That is the end of the chapter," he said. "I admit there are good ideas in it. I shall read some more later. I had not realized that the word 'prayer' is used to mean something so much like what I have always called meditation."

"What you have read impresses me as immensely suggestive," commented the Sage. "And anyone acquainted with theosophical literature ought to be able to see far more in it than those who have not had that advantage. Yet there is a certain type of mind which, in all honesty, would shrink from the re-phrasing which the Disciple advocated—that use of the term 'the Master' where the author speaks of God. They would feel that to put the Masters in the place of deity would be idolatrous and in any case 'personal.'"

"That would show on their part a very inadequate appreciation of personality," replied the Disciple. "If they take themselves as a standard, seeing even their own personalities with the personal consciousness, instead of from above, with the consciousness of the soul,—

the result is sure to be little and mean. The personality of a Master is an expression, in terms of human consciousness, of the Logos itself. If they would consider the orthodox view of Christ, and look for the truth that is in it rather than the error, they would get light on the problem of a Master's nature and function. I do not mean the view of Episcopalians, which, as a rule, relegates Christ to a seat at the right hand of God in a place beyond the skies; but the view of enlightened Christians such as St. Francis de Sales. Oddly enough, though, the Articles of Religion of the Episcopal Church insist upon the present and continued humanity of Christ as much as upon His continued embodiment of the Logos. The point is, however, that those who think they can reach the Higher Self, which is the Atma or Logos, directly, are mistaken. The Master who stands at the head of the hierarchy of souls to which they belong, focusses for them the light of the Logos; so that it is only through Him that they receive that light; only in Him that they can find their real and immortal self. They have to partake of His life and consciousness; have to make His will their own, as the only means they have of unifying themselves. It is foolish of them, therefore, to shut themselves off from the real for fear of the unreal. Masters are not likely to encourage idolatry. Nor, judging by the experience of one of them in Palestine, is there much danger of their being idolized. I, for one, should like to believe myself capable of over-doing it. My danger so far, has been of the opposite kind. . . . But I thought that the Philosopher was going to expound his ideal of womanhood. Was not that promised in the last SCREEN?"

"I said 'To be continued in our next,'" the Philosopher replied. "And, indirectly, some of the ground has been covered. The Sage turned it over to me because the subject is dangerous. And I am merely a man. The more I have thought about it, the more dangerous it appears. Tell a woman without charm, that to be a saint she needs to be more ideally womanly; and that an ideal woman, like a saint, necessarily is charming —and if she happens to be the wrong kind of woman, she will accuse you of depravity. Tell her that her only right is to love, and, if we may judge by newspaper reports, she may stab you with a hat pin. And really I do not blame her: I leave that to the self-respecting women. A woman married, who does not love, is in the hell of hells, and should not be regarded as responsible. And that happens so often nowadays—marriage being entered into so lightly—that a man should perhaps remain silent as penance for the bestial selfishness of other men. I hit upon a principle in the course of my cogitations which, on some other occasion, may serve as a point of departure; but this is all that I have to say at present:—A woman's love, which means a woman's womanliness and practical effectiveness, may be gauged by her power of self-forgetfulness, and by her intuitive perception of the needs of others. . . . I move that we adjourn."

T.

ELEMENTARY PAPER

Why Are We Here?

WHY are we here at all? and why at this particular place and time? and what are we here for? These are questions that are exciting great interest at the present time; and to the Theosophist the various answers are most interesting. A reader of the Clarion asks, "What on earth is life? Is there any meaning attached to it? What purpose does it serve?" The big-hearted, illogical editor, Mr. Robert Blatchford replies, "I do not know but I am of like opinion with you that there is no purpose behind life." He thinks "the universe has been evolved by the action of phenomena which we sometimes call natural laws, or natural forces."

In this he seems to agree with Mr. G. Bernard Shaw who has named this force the "Life Force." To Mr. Shaw this life force is a blind unconscious urge toward ever fuller manifestation. It knows nothing about what it is doing, it simply goes on pushing under a sort of inherent compulsion. Everything that exists is the outcome of this eternal push of the life force acting under inherent compulsion. It keeps on building new forms which last but a little while and then perish. In former ages this life force produced giant birds and monstrous reptiles, but it has now quit producing these for creatures of quite a different kind, much smaller but more highly organized, culminating in man. Still it knows no more about man than it does about anything else, for it did not plan him—the life force has no mind—but in a way stumbled onto him. Man is up to the present its most successful effort. It will keep on evolving higher and higher beings until it has evolved one who is omniscient and omnipotent. Thus instead of God creating the universe as has been supposed, the universe will ultimately create God.

As far as I can gather this is essentially the teaching of Bergson, the new authority in philosophy; according to this view there is no particular reason why we are here except that it just happened, and so there is no particular purpose for us to fulfill except to do the best we can for ourselves, for we shall soon cease to be and better and higher beings will take our place. We ask in vain why we

appeared at this particular time and place with our peculiar disposition, talents, tendencies, desires, and so on.

If we turn to the old orthodox religion we may get an answer that will be as satisfactory as this, and to a great many people more satisfying. When I was a boy the answer of the church to the questions why? and what for? was, that the Creator had sent us here on probation, and that we held in our own hands our eternal destiny—eternal joy or eternal pain. This answer the church has greatly modified, and now tells us that we have been sent here by a wise and loving Father who desires that we cultivate the higher and finer qualities of our nature; that we render loving service to our brothers and sisters who are also the children of God; and that our life and conduct here will determine our destiny hereafter. The church does not pretend to know anything about a prenatal existence, nor, except in a general way, what really happens after death. In this I refer more especially to Protestant Churches as it is almost impossible for an outsider to get accurate knowledge of the present day beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. Among the Protestants there is still a minority who hold and teach that death finally fixes our character and destiny.

The only satisfactory answers that I have found to these questions have come to me from the teachings of Theosophy. What it has to say on the birth and growth of the Ego and the laws of Karma and Reincarnation, seems to give full, reasonable, and satisfactory answers to the questions "Why are we here?" "Why are we here at this time and place with such characters, tastes and desires as we have?" "And what are we here for?" That is, what is the purpose and what will be the outcome of it all? This teaching as I have understood it is that all Human Egos have one source, and when they started from that source they were in a state of passive, negative purity, but with a positive desire for sentient existence. So like the Knights of ancient legends they left this home of spiritual purity to seek adventure in the world of matter and sensation. Or perhaps, the spiritual Ego looked down on the chaos of matter and in the spirit of divine compassion descended from its pure state to bring light out of the darkness, and order out of the conflicting elements, to make a Cosmos out of the chaos.

Whichever be the true idea we emerge from a state of passive rest into one of active experience; and have passed through a long series of existence and planes seeking to gather experience. Each succeeding plane was more gross than the preceding one until we are now on what we call the physical, or molecular plane—the grossest of all.

This is the turning point in our long journey, and from this we shall begin a series of existences on planes, each higher in point of

—the source from which they started—in a state of active perfection, rich with the soul experiences gathered through many lives. And we are here at this particular spot and with this particular character as the direct result of the way we have lived on all these different planes. We have been thinking thoughts and doing deeds which have turned out to be powerful causes; they have been seeds sown in our own aura, which lie latent until we get into conditions which favor germination and growth. By changing conditions and making them favorable a crop may be hastened and brought to harvest more quickly; or given unfavorable conditions, the harvest may be delayed.

The "desire for sentient existence" is a cause of reincarnation, but the appearance of an Ego at a particular time, in a particular place and condition suggests other causes. The recurrence of favorable conditions causes the ripening of the seeds of particular desires, and so draws the Ego back and gives it a body which is the expression of a certain set of desires and tendencies that form the character of the personality for that life. Of course the character of the *personality* is not necessarily the real character of the Ego. The real character of the Ego could only be represented by all the thoughts, desires, aspirations and tendencies of all past lives, but what we are and the place we fill is the direct result of our thoughts and desires in past lives. We are now on the physical plane and the quicker we can exhaust its experiences and learn its lessons, the sooner we shall pass to a higher plane. This is what we are here for.

The Masters of Theosophy, our Elder Brothers, are anxious to help us to select those experiences that are concerned with the eternal in man and to discard those that are impermanent. In other words, they seek to help us discern between the immortal and the mortal. While it is said that the Ego must go through every form of existence to gather experience, still we may now learn the lesson of some experiences without undergoing them. We do not have to take poison and die in order to learn the fatal effect of poison on the human body, we may see or learn of its effects and so get the experience needed. In like manner, by study, observation and loving sympathy with others we may gain many spiritual results. It often takes a long time to find out the relation of an experience to the immortal, and the relation of one experience to another. By love and hate we may be drawn aside from the middle path of duty, after which it takes a long time to get adjusted again, as it does also to learn indifference to pleasure and pain. These and other things cause delay in our evolution, and we should seek for ways of hastening this evolution by the acquirement of the necessary experiences as rapidly as possible.

The belief in and the practice of Universal Brotherhood, and unselfish working for others will help wonderfully in attaining the

spirituality than the preceding one, until the Egos reach their home object of our existence here. In order to exhaust the experiences of a plane one would have to go individually through every form of existence and the countless varieties therein until he had gathered all their experiences. On the human plane there are races, subraces and branch races, each branch having its tribal varieties and in them innumerable individuals and in each individual many phases of character. If we had to take an incarnation for each experience we could hardly get through before the *Round* was closed. In the race to which we at present belong there are so many nations that to incarnate for each one would take an enormous amount of time. But by cultivating the spirit of Universal Brotherhood and sympathy we are enabled to put ourselves into the place of others in joy and sorrow and so to share their experiences. By this means we can greatly diminish the number of incarnations we would otherwise have to undergo. The broader our sympathies become the greater will our experience be, the less the number of births and the more quickly shall we be permeated with a feeling of universal sympathy and so become a part of the universal law of order and harmony.

On the other hand if we cultivate the spirit of selfishness, closing our eyes and our hearts to the sorrows of others we shall increase the number of incarnations we must experience and gradually lose the power to sympathize with the joys and sorrows in the hearts of our brothers and sisters. This, of course, means that we shall become unable to enjoy our own lives, for that is the inevitable result of separating ourselves from others. Sympathy with all that lives, and an unselfish service of others not only lightens the burdens of those we help and removes the thorns from their path, but also makes our own path smoother and greatly increases our joy. The spirit of love, of self-forgetfulness is the law of progress.

"Let us take to our hearts a lesson—no lesson can braver be—
From the ways of the tapestry weavers on the other side of the sea.
Above their heads the pattern hangs; they study it with care;
The while their fingers deftly weave, their eyes are fastened there.
They tell this curious thing besides, of the patient, plodding weaver—
He works on the wrong side evermore, but works for the right side ever.
It is only when the weaver stops, and the web is loosed and turned,
That he sees his real handiwork—that his marvellous skill is learned.
Ah! the sight of its delicate beauty! how it pays him for all the cost,
No rarer, daintier work than his was ever done by the frost.
The years of men are nature's looms, let down from the place of the sun
Wherein we are weaving always, till the mystic web is done.
Sometimes blindly; but weaving surely, each for himself his fate;
We may not see how the right side looks; we must often weave and wait."

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

REVIEWS

Briefe die mir geholfen haben: Published by Paul Raatz, Berlin, Germany. This is the German translation of the Second Series of the letters of William Q. Judge, published in English with the significant title: *Letters that Have Helped Me.*

Perhaps the most effective comment we can make on this well-printed and attractive German translation of the Letters is to say that, after the first minute or two we forgot completely that it was a translation, forgot that we were reading letters, and remembered only the wonderful personality of Mr. Judge, his power, his light, his gentleness, his consecration. Like a mountain, he rises as we recede from him in time, looming up as one of the wisest teachers in the world, one with a sovereign certainty of touch in all questions of the conduct of life. We should like to see a complete edition of the "Letters" with Mr. Judge's name on the cover.

C. J.

Discipleship, by Reverend G. Campbell Morgan, London. Published by Fleming H. Revell Company. "How interesting it will be and how strange," a friend remarked last night, "when people begin to get Theosophy out of Christianity, instead of doing what most of us have done, get our Christianity through Theosophy." This morning the Reverend Campbell Morgan's little volume came to me. I heard of this clergyman first from two members of The Theosophical Society, who went many times to hear him. They reported that quite unconsciously he was teaching Christianity in a theosophical manner. The comment of those two members of The Theosophical Society should have been a preparation for the little book I have just read; yet it surprises me as much as if I had never heard of its author.

Mr. Morgan not only thinks of the Master as a definite, concrete individual, but he seems familiar with functions of Christ for which he can find no authority, I believe, in the teachings of any modern Church. He declares that the Master is at the head of a very strictly guarded technical school which provides opportunities for its members to prove in practical life the truths which the Head Master imparts to them individually. Mr. Morgan is very clear as to the definiteness of the Master's position in the School. "It is not that of a lecturer, from whose messages men may or may not deduce applications for themselves. It is not that of a prophet merely, making a Divine pronouncement, and leaving the issues of the same. It certainly is not that of a specialist on a given subject, declaring his knowledge, to the interest of a few, the amazement of more, and the bewilderment of most. It is none of these.

It is that of a teacher—Himself possessing full knowledge,—bending over a pupil, and for a set purpose, with an end in view, imparting knowledge step by step, point by point, ever working on toward a definite end. That conception includes also the true ideal of our position. We are not casual listeners, neither are we merely interested hearers desiring information; we are disciples, looking

toward and desiring the same end as the Master and therefore listening to every word, marking every inflection of voice that carries meaning, and applying all our energy to realizing the Teacher's purpose for us."

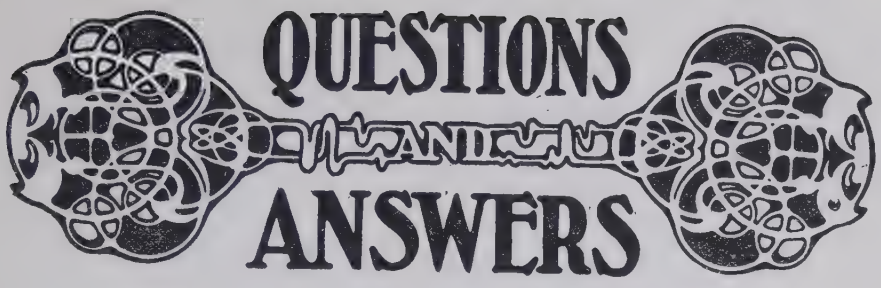
Mr. Morgan declares that the Master's School is more strictly guarded than any institution of man, because, on account of the importance of the truths to be revealed, the Master himself stands at the threshold forbidding any to enter save upon very definite and very rigorous conditions. Yet those conditions bar no race, color, creed or caste of men. All those who accept the conditions for entrance, become His pupils. "Disciples are those who gather around this Teacher and are trained by Him. Seekers after truth, not merely in the abstract, but as a life force, come to Him and join the circle of those to whom He reveals these great secrets of all true life. Sitting at His feet, they learn from the unfolding of His lessons the will and ways of God for them; and obeying each successive word, they realize within themselves, the renewing force and uplifting power thereof." The privilege of discipleship in the Master's School, means much more, however, than definite, fixed hours of instruction. It means that the disciple's whole life, every moment of it, is in the Teacher's keeping, is under His eye. The Teacher, in fact, moves just ahead of each pupil through every day, leaving in sight the print of His feet in which the pupil is to set his own:

"All the circumstances and surroundings of the disciples are in the hands of the Supreme Lord who teaches, and these He manipulates and arranges for the purpose of the advancement and development of His own."

Mr. Morgan says the word disciple—and the individual relationship it implies—has gone out of use in the modern world. In the churches it surely has. I wonder if some one will object if I say that one of the gifts Theosophy is making to the Church is in bringing the Church to see the possibility of discipleship today.

ALFRED WILLISTON.

I said, "One gets so hungry on the way." He answered: "But for the hunger, you would never complete the journey."—Book of Items.



QUESTION 144.—*What is the Over Soul and what is its relation to the souls of men?*

ANSWER.—It may prove helpful in considering one single phase of this large question to think in familiar electrical terms. Considered in this light the spiritual man, the real individuality, the monad or the soul in man, would be the force and power (current used) in individual motors and the Over Soul would then be regarded as the force and power (electricity) recognized as existing somewhere and somehow but not understood even by scientists. The Masters in the Lodge might be considered as the force and power (current generated) in the central generator or dynamo, drawing force and power from the Exhaustless Source and transmitting it to the individual power-units or motors. In this sense the Over Soul is the Source of force and power and the Man-Soul its lowest manifestation. There is essential unity in the chain yet there is also distinctly individual expression. To carry the simile further it will be recalled that the effectiveness of the electric current in practical application or lower plane manifestation as kinetic energy depends upon the relative efficiency of the motor. If the latter be merely a mass of metal it can manifest nothing and as its efficiency or harmonic running as an operating machine improves there is an increasing percentage of available output. The value of a motor depends upon its "efficiency" —that is to say on how much of the current received it furnishes in available kinetic energy; or the proportion the "horse-power output" bears to the current "input." So perhaps the effectiveness of the individual soul functioning in the personal man depends upon the power of the human to express the divine.

G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—The Oversoul is the source of all Love. It is Love itself—it is God. It is that from which all Love emanates and towards which all Love flows.

Its relation to the souls of men is that between the Sun and a bit of sunlit earth. There is an unbroken stream of sunshine which touches the earth. At the same time the earth is giving back the warmth and sunlight which it has already caught and made its own. So that our bit of earth is both earthy and sunny. In the same way we are both human and Divine. The more of the sunshine or Love or goodness we can catch, make our own, radiate and give back, the more our souls are one with the Oversoul.

T. M.

QUESTION 145.—*What is the attitude of a Theosophist toward his neighbors?*

ANSWER.—A Theosophist should have no personal ends to serve, no hobby to ride, no special doctrine which he wishes to force upon others. He does not seek converts to his personal creed, for he realizes that the beliefs of others are as essential to them as his own are to him. If they are satisfied with their

possessions, what warrant has he for asking them to test his theories and conclusions? To the true Theosophist, the position of others, even of those near and dear to him, is not a matter of vital concern. As he goes about his daily duties, the superficial observer might conclude that his attitude toward persons and events was carefree to the point of indifference. Still the puzzled observer would find him an industrious worker among all classes of men, actively concerned in all movements that make for the betterment of mankind. He may tell you in one moment that "Each one has to bear his own burdens," and yet in the next moment he may assist someone who has fallen under a heavy load to rise and journey on.

According to commonly accepted standards his conduct may seem most inconsistent; praiseworthy in one case, blameworthy in the next. But look a little deeper; look to his motive for such a course. Certainly he has chosen the more difficult social path; but from his standpoint he could not conscientiously act otherwise. In his company, one will receive no flattery, and may even experience an affront, or quiet condemnation. If the Theosophist is true to himself and to the higher welfare of his friends he does not cater to their likes and dislikes, that is to their personal egotism. Sooner or later they will appreciate that he is true to the highest in himself and in them; their resentment will be changed to gratitude, in proportion as they perceive that the real good of each is aimed at, rather than the gaining of passing good will.

To one who perceives the Law acting upon its own plane, absolute justice will be seen to prevail in all conditions; any other state of affairs will appear to him quite impossible. He who perceives the true action of Law will not be overjoyed at any seeming good fortune or dismayed at any apparent evil; for he realizes that all works toward a common good. The extreme suffering and distress which befall mankind, is but one manifestation of the same kind, just and inexorable Law, which in another phase yields great joy and pleasure; both are blessings, which inevitably tend to higher development.

Therefore, instead of allowing himself to be wrought into great joy or deep distress upon the occurrence of any event, he should remain calm and tranquil under all circumstances. Thus does he more consciously become the Law by acting as it does, impersonally and impartially.

Applying this principle in the ordinary affairs of life: we should sympathize with those who suffer and assist them to the full extent of our power, endeavouring to show them that deliverance lies in themselves, in the Higher Selves of each. That ultimate escape from trial, suffering, sorrow, misery, may be found, not by flight, but rather by bravely facing and overcoming them; thus developing that inner strength which inheres potentially in every one. To attempt escape, to avoid, to compromise, is but to deceive themselves; it only lengthens and intensifies present pain. That their first duty is to call upon and exercise that self-control which is evidence of true strength. That these very trials and sufferings are for the express purpose of evolving the real being which they as yet scarcely know. That their present actions determine their future; for thus is destiny vested in ourselves. That an honest and conscientious performance of the ever present duty is the only key to real growth, true happiness and sure advance.

In the true light, there is no small or great, no high or low. It is not alone *what* one does, but *how* one does it, that determines the worth and merit of action. the principle of the widow's mite holds good over all. When one does *all* he can, the smallest thing has as much real merit as the greatest. Fierce contests often rage in silence and obscurity. In the conscious performance of present duty, come light and illumination, preparation and strength for the next.

W. M. T.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

A LETTER OF GREETING

The following Letter of Greeting to the T. S. Convention of 1912 from the "United German Branches of the T. S." was either lost or mislaid last April, and was not, therefore, read to the Convention or included in the Report published in THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for July. It gives us great pleasure to publish this letter now.

The "United German Branches of the T. S." are a purely voluntary effort toward more effective local work. Branches are entirely at liberty either to co-operate with this effort or to work independently. On the one hand, Branches which wish to work independently may do so without the least shadow of reproach; on the other hand, ability and willingness to work with others is a certain sign of Theosophical life. EDITOR.

Berlin, April 5, 1912.

To the Members of "The Theosophical Society" in Convention Assembled.

In the name of the members of the "United German Branches of the T. S." I send you the heartiest greetings and good wishes. We are sorry not to be able to send anyone to New York to represent us at the Convention, therefore we must be content to sense the Spirit of the Convention not by personal contact, but through the spiritual plane, which unites us all to one common Soul.

This year was one in which we had almost nothing to do with matters of organization, as in this respect everything is settled. Therefore we could devote all our time to the real work of our beloved movement and especially of our "T. S." Our work progressed calmly and steadily, always with the aim in mind to awaken the "spirit" in ourselves as well as in our neighbors. The number of Branches belonging to our German Union has grown less, because the four Branches in Berlin have united into *one* Branch, and one Branch (Dresden) has separated from us. So we have now five Branches.

The most joyful event that happened here in Germany was the visit of Mr. Johnston, Chairman of the Executive Committee. Every one of us here in Germany received benefit from this visit; on the one hand, much that we had unconsciously in our minds manifested itself to our consciousness, while, on the other hand, our minds were deepened or elevated and came into closer contact with the spiritual world. This is the experience of many or all of our members. Very often I have been asked if Mr. Johnston is going to repeat his visit this year. This does not mean that the result of his former visit has passed, but that we are longing to have the result strengthened and to come more and more into closer and more direct contact with our American comrades and with the spirit, which is already manifested in them, as the elder workers of the movement!

With the best wishes for a successful Convention I remain, as ever,

Your comrade, PAUL RAATZ,

Secretary of the "United German Branches of the T. S."

THE CONVENTON OF THE "UNION OF GERMAN BRANCHES"

Berlin, Germany, August 12, 1912.

Our Convention this year took place in Berlin on May 17th and 18th. It was very well attended and an enthusiastic, joyful spirit prevailed during all the proceedings. The Convention in England took place at the same time and the combined consciousness of the earnest workers in both lands was plainly felt. At our business meeting 73 persons (delegates and a few guests) assembled in the rooms of the Berlin Branch; and this large number gave evidence of the active interest which the German members take in all Theosophical Society matters. The letters of greeting from our comrades in other lands and from those in Germany who could not attend personally, served to heighten the enthusiasm, as they always have done in former years, showing, as they do, the sincere brotherly feeling which unites the hearts of our members. The reports of all Branches were very encouraging, active work being carried on in all parts of Germany.

Mr. Raatz, the Secretary of the "Union," mentioned three events of importance which had occurred during the year just passed. First, Mr. Johnston's visit, which had proved a blessing everywhere, giving new impulse to spiritual, inner life and strengthening the unity of heart. Second, the amalgamation of the four Berlin Branches into one large Branch. This has proved a concentration of force which had hardly been dreamed of. Third, the withdrawal of the Dresden Branch from the "Union" and the admittance of the Aussig Branch. In his report Mr. Raatz emphasized the fact that the "Union" is not a national Branch and that each single Branch is directly connected with the "Theosophical Society" (New York). The aims of the "Union" are simply to facilitate the work in Germany and to overcome some obstacles, resulting in a high degree from the difference in language. Six Branches now belong to the "Union" (The four Berlin Branches counting as one), and the total membership is 186. The Branches are located in Berlin, Munich, Flensburg, Suhl, Neusalz, Aussig.

Mr. Corvinus, Corresponding Secretary of the "Union," reported that correspondence had been carried on as heretofore. Articles translated from the QUARTERLY, which could not be printed in our magazine, *Theosophisches Leben,* for want of space, had been circulated among the Branches and these had been gratefully accepted and had proved of great benefit. A new method of support for our magazine was discussed, consisting of so-called "propaganda" subscriptions. It was proposed to members and regular subscribers who wished to aid the magazine, that they should pay an extra subscription for three months, six months or longer, to be sent to different addresses which they furnish and where they wish to awaken interest; the addresses to be changed as often as desired. In this way a large number will become readers of *Theosophisches Leben.*

On the second day of the Convention Mr. Schoch gave a public lecture on "Christ in Social Life," before an audience of more than 300. It was listened to with great interest and followed by a lively discussion. The lecture has been printed in our magazine.

Sunday evening was devoted to a social gathering of members and near friends. Mr. John read an excellent short paper on "Branch Work," which was followed by an interesting discussion.

O. KÖHLER,
Secretary to the Convention.

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION IN NORWAY

Christiania, Norway.

Our Annual Convention was held in Christiania on May 27, 1912. The deliberations were, as usual, marked by harmony and peace.

The Karma Branch has held weekly meetings—every Thursday—from the middle of September, 1911, up to the time of the Convention with only one exception, Maundy-Thursday. Public lectures have been given at nine of the meetings, with an average attendance of 33 listeners. The other meetings—25 in number—have been devoted to the study of the first three Gospels, the average attendance being 18 members and outsiders. Those present at these studies seemed to be highly interested, and several of the outsiders took part in the discussion, always in a tolerant and brotherly spirit. These studies seemed to answer a need, and they will probably be continued in the Autumn.

One member of the Branch has held private meetings every Sunday night. These are attended mostly by people of the working class; topics from the Bible have been discussed.

In the past year a new Branch—Aurvanga Branch—has been formed by four members living close by each other outside the town.

The members of the Karma Branch take great interest in this new centre of activity and feel that the Aurvanga Branch was much needed in its place.

A pamphlet, titled "Man, Mortal and Immortal," has been published and distributed to the extent of nearly four thousand copies. There is much need of theosophical literature, and outsiders are borrowing books from our little library which contains many of the principal theosophical scriptures in foreign languages; what we sadly need is really good theosophical literature in the Norwegian language.

There is much work to be done in this country, and much can be accomplished, if the Master finds us ready to do his work according to his will. So be it.

T. H. KNOFF.

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL BRITISH BRANCH

The Convention was held at 46 Brook Street, London, on May 19, 1912. Dr. Keightley was elected temporary Chairman, and later permanent Chairman.

Mr. A. D. Clarke was elected Convention Secretary.

Greetings were read from Mr. Charles Johnston as Chairman of the Executive Committee T. S. (New York), Mr. Paul Raatz (Berlin Branch), Mr. Kohl (Munich), Mr. E. H. Lincoln, Mr. Basil Cuddon, Miss Trood and Mr. Edwards. The Secretary of the Convention was instructed to reply with best thanks for the fraternal good wishes.

The reports of the general officers were then presented.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

During each year the activity of the Society has been quiet and steadfast, and this year is no exception. The Branches have held their meetings regularly, as you will hear in their Reports. The activity has been greatest in the North of England, and the increase in membership is maintained. At the same time, no new Branches have been formed, though the activity in all has been maintained. I am sorry to say that, owing to the departure of three of our members for Canada, the Consett Branch is very likely to become inactive.

We have added eight new members to our list since our last Convention, and owing to the earnest activity of three of them, it is very probable that a further centre or Branch may be formed in Glasgow. As I said before, three of our

members have gone away, and with regret I report that death has removed one of our most earnest members. There is thus a net gain of four members in the British National Branch.

The Treasurer's Report will be laid before you in due course and it certainly shows a satisfactory balance. I am also glad to state that the support given to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is this year larger than before. Further than this, its outside circulation is increasing. To aid in promoting this, would, I think, be a very justifiable form of Theosophical activity on the part of any or all of our members, and be of practical assistance to our American brethren who so generously provide the means of publishing and give their labour so freely in editing the Magazine.

The Report of the Corresponding Secretary to the Executive Committee will also be laid before you, with suggestions.

The Report of the Pamphlet Committee will also be presented. I may add that Professor Mitchell's article in the QUARTERLY on "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society" would seem to be an historical and ethical survey which should be mastered by every member and made familiar. It provides a statement of the reasons why we are what we are, and a reply to those enquirers who want to know why there are so many Societies which call themselves Theosophical. At the close of the transaction of business, I would suggest that we turn our attention to the root of this matter as being the best direction to which we can devote our work of the coming year.

There is in the greeting of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and in the title of the German Branches an allusion to a point which it will be well for us to consider. If any action has to be taken, none can be taken now. But it will be well for us to consider the matters so raised.

ARCHIBALD KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary, British National Branch.

May 19th, 1912.

[Encouraging reports were made by the Corresponding Secretary, by the Treasurer, and by the Publication Committee. We regret that there is not space to give them in full.—THE EDITOR.]

The following officers were elected for the coming year.
Secretary, Doctor Archibald Keightley.
Treasurer, Mr. E. H. Lincoln.
Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Alice Graves.
The Convention adjourned after a general discussion.

ARTHUR D. CLARKE,
Convention Secretary.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

ABRIDGMENT OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE, (Hillard)	$2.16
A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY, by Katherine Hillard	.10
BHAGAVAD GITA, translated by Charles Johnston	1.00
BHAGAVAD GITA, Edited by W. Q. Judge, leather	.75
CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION, by W. Q. Judge, paper	.10
DREAM OF RAVAN, cloth	1.00
ESOTERIC BUDDHISM, by A. P. Sinnett, cloth	1.25
FIVE YEARS OF THEOSOPHY	3.25
FRAGMENTS, by Cavé	.60
IDYLL OF THE WHITE LOTUS, cloth	1.00
KARMA: WORKS AND WISDOM, by Charles Johnston	.35
KARMA, by A. P. Sinnett, a novel, cloth	.75
KEY TO THEOSOPHY, by H. P. Blavatsky	2.00
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME, by W. Q. Judge	
Vol. I, compiled by Jasper Niemand, cloth	.50
Vol. II, compiled by Thomas Green and Jasper Niemand, cloth	.60
LIGHT OF ASIA, by Sir Edwin Arnold, cloth, 75c.; leather	1.00
LIGHT ON THE PATH, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
MAGIC, WHITE AND BLACK, by Franz Hartmann, M.D., cloth	2.00
MEDITATION, by Henry Bedinger Mitchell	.20
NIGHT-MARE TALES, by H. P. Blavatsky, cloth	.50
OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY, by W. Q. Judge, paper, 50c.; cloth	.75
OCCULT WORLD, by A. P. Sinnett, cloth	1.25
PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS, translated by Charles Johnston	1.10
REINCARNATION, by E. D. Walker, cloth	1.50
REINCARNATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Jas. M. Pryse, paper, 35c.; cloth	.60
SECRET DOCTRINE, by H. P. Blavatsky, Vols. I and II, and Index, cloth.	12.50
SERMON ON THE MOUNT, translated by Jas. M. Pryse, paper, 35c.; cloth	.60
SOME MODERN FAILINGS, Che-Yew-Tsang	.10
TALKS ON RELIGION, by H. B. Mitchell	1.50
THEOSOPHY AS AN INFLUENCE IN LIFE, by Archibald Keightley	.10
THE APOCALYPSE UNSEALED, by James M. Pryse	2.00
THE CREED OF BUDDHA	1.50
THE CREED OF CHRIST	1.25
THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM, by Charles Johnston	.20
THE SONG OF LIFE, by Charles Johnston, cloth	.30
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THEOSOPHY, by H. B. Mitchell	.20
THE THEOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS, by Charles Johnston	1.25
THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD, cloth	.50
UNITY OF RELIGIONS, by J. W. Keightley	.10
VOICE OF THE SILENCE, by H. P. Blavatsky, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
VOW OF POVERTY AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Jasper Niemand, paper.	.15
CABINET SIZE PHOTO, H. P. BLAVATSKY or W. Q. JUDGE	.50
THEOSOPHICAL BADGES, gold, 2.50; rolled gold	1.00

These and any other books on Theosophical, Religious and Philosophical subjects, can be obtained from

THE SECRETARY T. S.,

159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

BROOKLYN EAGLE PRESS.